FIQH us-SUNNAH

Funerals and *Dhikr*

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فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ
فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟
فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا .

But no, by your Lord!
They do not really believe
unless they make you
(O Prophet) a judge
of all on which they disagree
among themselves,
and then find in their hearts
no bar to an acceptance
of your decision
and give themselves up to it
in utter self-surrender (an-Nisa' 4:65).

FUNERALS
GUIDANCE OF THE *SUNNAH* CONCERNING SICKNESS AND MEDICATION

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Chapter One

SICKNESS

There are many ahadith which explain that sickness expiates evil deeds and wipes out sins. Of these, some are given below:

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When Allah wants to be good to someone, He tries him with some hardship."[1]

Abu Hurairah also reports that Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said: "For every misfortune, illness, anxiety, grief, or hurt that afflicts a Muslim – even the hurt caused by the pricking of a thorn – Allah removes some of his sins."[2] Ibn Mas'ud said: "I visited the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, while he had a fever. I exclaimed: 'O Messenger of Allah! You have a high fever!' He said: 'My fever is as much as two among you [might have].' I asked: 'Is it because you have a double reward?' He replied: 'Yes, that is right. No Muslim is afflicted with any hurt, even if it is no more than the pricking of a thorn, but Allah wipes off his sins because of it and his sins fall away from him as leaves fall from a tree'."[3]

Abu Hurairah said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, remarked: 'The example of a believer is like a fresh tender plant; from whichever direction the wind blows, it bends the plant. But when the wind dies down, it straightens up again. (Similarly a believer is tested by afflictions to strengthen his faith and heart, and he remains patient and firm). And an evil person is like a pine tree which remains hard and stiff until Allah breaks it whenever He wills."

Patience During Illness

Anyone suffering from an illness should remain patient, for there is no reward better or more enriching than that reserved for those who endure in patience.

Suhaib ibn Sinan narrated that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "How remarkable is the case of the believer! There is good for him in everything, but this is not the case for anyone except for the believer. When the believer

[1] Bukhari and Muslim
[2] Bukhari and Muslim
[3] Bukhari

receives any good, he is thankful to Allah, and gets a reward. And when some misfortune befalls him, he endures it patiently, for which he is (also) rewarded."[4]

Anas narrates: "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: 'Allah says: "When I afflict a servant of mine with respect to his two most beloved things (meaning his eyes), and he endures it patiently, I grant him paradise in return'."[5]

'Ata ibn Rabah related that he heard Ibn 'Abbas say: "Shall I show you a woman of Paradise?"I said: "Yes, indeed." He said: "A black woman came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said: 'I suffer from epileptic fits, and because of these, (at times) my body becomes uncovered. Would you invoke Allah, the Exalted One, to cure me of this disease?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'If you wish, you can be patient and you will attain Paradise (for this suffering). But if you prefer, I will pray to Allah, the Exalted, to cure you of it?' The woman said: 'I will be patient,' then added: 'I become uncovered (when I have fits), so invoke Allah for me that I do not become uncovered.' So the Prophet, peace be upon him, prayed for her."[6]

To Complain of One's Illness

It is permitted for a patient to complain of his pain and illness to a physician or a friend, provided he does not do so to express his or her anger or impatience. It was mentioned earlier that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "My fever is as severe as that of any two of you." Once 'Aisha complained to the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, about her headache, lamenting: "O my head." He retorted: "Nay, rather (I should say) O my head!" Likewise it is reported that 'Abdullah ibn Al-Zubair asked his ailing mother, Asma bint Abi Bakr, "How are you feeling now?" She replied: "I am in pain."

A patient should thank and praise Allah, before talking about his distress and complaint. Ibn Mas'ud said: "If one thanks Allah before complaining about his pain or disease, then it is not considered impatience. Indeed, to refer one's complaint to Allah, is quite lawful." Jacob (the prophet), said: "I complain of my distraction and anguish only to Allah." The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, himself prayed: "O Allah! to You I complain of my weakness."

A Sick Person is Rewarded for All the Good Deeds that He Would (usually) Perform in a State of Health

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If a servant (of Allah) falls sick or goes on a journey, he (continues to be)

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[4] Muslim

[5] Bukhari

[6] Bukhari and Muslim

rewarded for the good deeds that he used to do when he was healthy or at home."[7]

Visiting the Sick

It is Islamic etiquette to visit a sick Muslim, to provide him moral support, and to make sure that he or she is well taken care of.

Ibn 'Abbas said: "The first visit to a sick person is sunnah, while any subsequent visit is a voluntary act (a good deed)." Abu Musa reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captives."[8]

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "A Muslim has six obligations to another Muslim." "What are these?" they asked. He replied: "To greet another Muslim when you meet him; to respond when he invites you; to give him your (sincerest) advice when he seeks it; to say 'may Allah have mercy upon you' when he sneezes and says 'may Allah be praised'; to visit him when he falls ill; and when he dies, to attend his funeral." [9]

Reward for Visiting the Sick

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "A caller from heaven calls out to the person who visits a sick person, 'You are good and your path is good. May you enter your residence in Paradise'." [10]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "Verily, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, will say on the Day of Judgement: 'O Son of Adam! I fell ill, but you did not visit Me.' The human will ask, 'O my Sustainer! How could I visit You when You are the Sustainer of the Worlds? And how can You fall sick?' He, the Almighty, will say, 'Did you not know that such and such a servant of Mine was sick. But you did not visit him. Did you not know that, had you visited him, you would have found Me by his side? O Son of Adam! I asked you for food, but you fed Me not?' The man will say, 'O my Sustainer! How could I feed You when You are the Sustainer of the Worlds? And You are free from hunger?' He, the Almighty, will say: 'Such and such a servant of Mine asked you for food, but you refused to give him any. Did you not know that, had you fed him, you would have found it recorded here with Me? O Son of Adam! I asked you for a drink, but you did not give Me any.' The man will say, 'O my Sustainer! How could I give You a drink while You are the Sustainer of the Worlds and are free from thirst?' He, the Almighty will say, 'Such and such a servant of Mine asked you for a drink,

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[7] Bukhari

[8] Bukhari

[9] Bukhari and Muslim

[10] Ibn Majah

but you did not give him any. Had you given him a drink, you would have surely found that recorded with Me.'" [11]

Thawban reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Verily, when a Muslim visits his sick Muslim brother, he is, as it were, in one of the gardens of Paradise (enjoying its ripe fruits) until he returns to his home."

Ali said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying: 'When a Muslim visits a sick Muslim in the morning, seventy thousand angels pray for him, and they continue praying for him until that evening. When one visits the sick in the evening, the angels pray for him and continue praying for him until the next morning. Moreover, he will be rewarded with the choicest fruits of Paradise." [12]

The Etiquette of Visiting the Sick

It is recommended that the visitor pray for the recovery and health of the patient and that he should urge him to endure his trouble patiently. He should say nice words to cheer him up and keep his spirits high. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When you visit a sick person, give him hope for a long life. This will not avert anything, but will please the patient and give him comfort." When the Prophet, peace be upon him, visited a sick person he used to say to him: "Do not worry! It is a means of cleansing (you) of sins, Allah willing."

It is preferred to shorten the visits and to make them less frequent as far as possible, lest they should become burdensome for the patient,except when the patient himself desires longer and more frequent visits.

Women Visiting (Sick) Men

Bukhari reports: "Umm ad-Darda went to visit one of the Ansar who used to come to the mosque."[13] It is narrated from 'Aishah that she said: "When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, migrated to Madinah, both Abu Bakr and Bilal fell sick. So I went to see them, and I said: 'O dear father! How are you (now)?' And, 'O Bilal! How are you now?' She (further) said: 'When Abu Bakr had high fever he would recite:

> Every man is amongst his family, yet death is nearer to him than his shoe laces.

And when Bilal recovered from fever, he would recite:

> Would that I could stay overnight in a valley wherein I should be surrounded by *idhkhir* and *jalil* (kinds of fragrant grass). Would that one day I could drink of the water of Majinna, and would that (the two mountains) Shama and Tafil would appear to me.

'Aishah added: "Then I went to Allah's Messenger and told him about it,

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[11] Muslim

[12] Tirmidhi has reported it as a sound hadith.

[13] Bukhari, Chapter 'Women Visiting Sick Men.'

whereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'O Allah! Bestow on us the love of Madinah as we love Makkah, or even more than that. O Allah! Make it healthy and bless its *sa'* and *mudd* (measures of food) for us, and divert its fever to (the place called) al-Juhfah."

A Muslim Visiting a Non-Muslim Patient

It is permissible for a Muslim to visit a sick non-Muslim person. In the chapter, "Visiting a Sick Polytheist," Bukhari says: It is narrated on the authority of Anas that "a Jewish boy, who used to serve the Prophet, peace be upon him, once fell ill. The Prophet, peace be upon him, visited him and invited him to Islam, saying: 'Submit to Allah's will.' So he accepted Islam." Similarly Bukhari narrates from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab that he reported from his father that "when Abu Talib (the Prophet's uncle and an idolater) was on his deathbed, the Prophet, peace be upon him, visited him."

Visiting an Eye Patient

Abu Daw'ud narrates that Zaid bin al-Arqam said: "I suffered from an eye disease and the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, came to visit me."

Asking the Sick for a Prayer

Ibn Majah narrates on the authority of Umar that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "When you visit a sick person, ask him to pray for you. Indeed, the prayer of a sick person is like the prayer of angels." According to the author of *Az-Zawa'id*, the chain of narrators of this hadith is broken, yet it is sound and trustworthy, because otherwise it is authentic and narrators are trustworthy.

Seeking Medical Treatment

There are many ahadith which encourage the Muslims to seek medical treatment.

Usamah ibn Shuraik narrated: "I came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and found him with his companions. They were calm and serene as if there were birds over their heads. I greeted them and sat down. Then some bedouins came from various places. They asked him: 'O Allah's Messenger! Should we seek medical treatment for our illnesses?' He replied: 'Yes, you should seek medical treatment, because Allah, the Exalted, has let no disease exist without providing for its cure, except for one ailment, namely, old age'." [14]

Anas ibn Mas'ud reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Verily, Allah has not let any malady occur without providing its remedy.

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[14] Reported by Ahmad and the Six Sunnan. Tirmidhi considers it a sound hadith.

Therefore seek medical treatment for your illnesses."[15]

Jabir narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "There is a cure for every disease. Whenever an illness is treated with its right remedy, it will, by Allah's permission, be cured." [16]

Using Prohibited Things As Medicine

The majority of scholars hold that the use of wine and other prohibited things as medicine, is unlawful. They base their arguments on the following ahadith:

Wa'il ibn Hujr al-Hadrami reported that, "Tariq ibn Suwaid asked the Prophet, peace be upon him, if he could use liquor as medicine. The Prophet replied: 'It is not a cure, but a disease'."[17]

Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet, peace be upon him, reports that he once said: "Allah has not placed a cure for your diseases in things that He has forbidden for you."[18]

Abu ad-Darda reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah has sent down both the malady and its remedy. For every disease He has created a cure. So seek medical treatment, but never with something the use of which Allah has prohibited."[19]

Abu Hurairah narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, prohibited the use of a harmful medicine, namely, poison."[20]

Using a few, unnoticeable drops that cannot induce intoxication, is not prohibited, provided they are a part of a compound medicine. For example, the use of a small amount of pure natural silk in a woven fabric, as explained in *al-Manar*.

Treatment by a non-Muslim Physician

In his book, *Al-Adab ash-Shar'iah*, Ibn Muflih writes that Shaikh Taqiyyuddin Ibn Taymiyyah said: "A credible Jew or Christian who has medical expertise may treat a sick Muslim. Such a person may, likewise, be entrusted with funds or other financial transactions, for Allah, the Exalted, says: 'Among the People of the Book are some who, if entrusted with a hoard of gold, will (readily) pay it back; others, who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand over them demanding it'."[21]

We find in a sound hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, hired a

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[15] Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and al-Hakim.

[16] Muslim

[17] Muslim, Abu Daw'ud, and Tirmidhi.

[18] Reported by Baihaqi; Ibn Hibban considers this hadith to be sound. Bukhari has also related it on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud.

[19] Reported by Abu Daw'ud. Among the narrators of this hadith we find Isma'il ibn 'Aiyash, who is considered trustworthy by the Syrians, but regarded as a weak narrator by the scholars of Hijaz.

[20] Ahmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah.

[21] Qur'an 3:75

polytheist as a guide at the time of his migration to Madinah, so he entrusted him with his life and money. The people of the tribe of Khuza'ah, who were both Muslims and non-Muslims, acted as scouts for the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. It is also reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered Muslims to seek treatment from Al-Harith ibn Kaldah, who was a disbeliever. But when a Muslim physician with the expertise is available, one should seek his or her treatment and not turn to anyone else. The same applies when one has to entrust a person with funds or deal with him in business. If a Muslim has to confide in or turn to someone from the people of the Book for medical treatment, he may do so. It is not prohibited to befriend Jews and Christians. And when the Muslim has an opportunity to talk to them, he should address them in ways that are polite and sincere. Indeed, Allah, the Exalted, says: "And do not argue with the people of the Book, except in ways that are best."[22]

In a hadith on the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, Abu Al-Khattab tells us that "the Prophet, peace be upon him, sent a man of the Khuza'ah tribe to gather intelligence, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, accepted his report despite the fact that he was a disbeliever." This proves, according to Abu Al-Khattab, that it is quite permissible to take the advice of a non-believing physician for diagnosis and treatment, provided he is not suspect and his fidelity is not doubtful."

Permission for a Woman to Seek Medical Treatment from Men

In cases of necessity, it is permissible for a man to treat a woman, and for a woman to treat a man. Bukhari reports from Rubayyie' bint Mu'awwidh ibn 'Afra that she said: "We participated in battles with the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and we (women) provided the people with water, looked after them, and brought the wounded and the dead back to Madinah." [23]

In his book, *Al-Fath*, Al-Hafiz writes: "When necessary, it is permissible to treat strangers with whom one is not related or not consanguine. Therefore, looking at, probing, and touching, etc. , in such cases are also allowed."

In *Al-Adab al-Shar'iah* Ibn Muflih writes: "If a woman is sick and no female doctor is available, a male doctor may treat her. In such a case the doctor is permitted to examine her, including her genitals. The same applies to a male doctor treating a sick man. Ibn Hamdan says: "If a man is sick and there is no male doctor available to treat him, then he may be treated by a female doctor. She is permitted to examine him, including his genitals." Al-Qadi writes: "A physician is permitted to look at a woman and her private parts in case of necessity. Likewise, if need be, a woman or a man is permitted to look at the private parts of a man."

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[22] Qur'an 29:46

[23] Bukhari, Chapter on "Can a Man Treat a Woman, or a Woman a Man?"

The Use of Incantation and Supplications in the Treatment

The use of incantation and supplications is allowed for treatment, provided their content is the remembrance of Allah and they are written in a comprehensible language. Otherwise their content might well contain something polytheistic without one being aware of it. 'Awf ibn Malik reported: "We practiced incantation in the pre-Islamic days so we asked the Messenger of Allah, 'What is your opinion about it?' He said: 'Let me see your incantations. There is nothing wrong with the incantation that does not contain any polytheistic statements'."[24]

Ar-Rabi' says: "I asked Ash-Shafi'i about incantation. He replied: 'There is nothing wrong in using the Qur'an for incantation or any other words that contain Allah's remembrance.' Then I asked him: 'Is it permissible for Muslims to approach the Christians and the Jews for incantation?' Ash-Shafi'i replied: 'Yes, provided they use the revelation from Allah and words that contain His remembrance'."

Some Supplications Found in Hadith

'Aishah reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to seek refuge in Allah for some of his family members. He used to touch them with his right hand, saying:

Allahahuma Rabbin nas adhhabal ba'sa, ashfi wa antashafi, la shifa' illa shifa'uka shifa' la yughadiru saqma

«اللهم رب الناس اذهب البأساء إشف وأنت الشافي لا شفاء إلا شفاؤك شفاء لا يغادر سقماً»

"O Allah! The Sustainer of mankind! Remove the illness, cure the disease. You are the One Who cures. There is no cure except Your cure. Grant (us) a cure that leaves no illness."[25]

'Uthman ibn Abu Al-'As relates that "once he complained of pain in his body to Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: 'Put your hand where you feel pain in your body and say,

"*Bismillah* (in the name of Allah)," and say, "*A'udhu bi'izzatillah wa qudratihi min sharri ma ajidu wa uhadhiru*

«بسم الله أعوذ بعزة الله وقدرته من شر ما أجد وأحاذر»

(I seek refuge in the might of Allah and in His Power from the evil that I find and that I fear)," seven times'." 'Uthman continued: "I did that a few times and Allah removed my pain. I always advised my family and others to do the same."[26]

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[24] Muslim and Abu Daw'ud.
[25] Bukhari and Muslim.
[26] Muslim.

Muhammad ibn Salim reported: "Thabit Al-Banani said to me: 'O Muhammad! When you have any pain, put your hand where you feel pain, then say:

Bismallah a' udhu bi' izatillah min shari ma ajidu min waj' i hadha

«بسم الله أعوذ بعزة الله من شر ما أجد من وجعي هذا»

"In the Name of Allah! I seek refuge in Allah's might from the evil of this pain." Then remove your hand, and repeat the same for an odd number of times. Then he said to me that Anas ibn Malik had told him that Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, had taught this to him."[27]

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When someone visits a sick person whose time of death has not come, and says seven times:

As'alu Allah al 'azim Rabbil 'arshil 'azim an yshfiaka

«أسأل الله العظيم رب العرش العظيم أن يشفيك»

'I ask Allah, the Mighty, the Lord of the mighty throne, to cure you,' Allah will cure him of that illness."[28]

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas also narrates that "the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to seek protection for Al-Hasan and Al-Hussain (his grandsons) with the words:

A' udhukuma bi kalamatillahi tamah min kulli shaitanin wa hamatin wa min kulli 'ainin lamatin

«أعوذكما بكلمات الله التامة من كل شيطان وهامة ومن كل عين لامة»

'I seek protection for you with Allah's perfect words from every satan and crawling creature and every evil eye.' He also added: 'Your father (Ibrahim) sought protection for Ismai'l and Ishaq with these same words'." [29]

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas reports that "the Prophet, peace be upon him, visited him while he was sick and said: 'O Allah, make Sa'd well! O Allah, make Sa'd well! Make Sa'd well!'"[30]

Prohibition of Using Amulets

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, prohibited the use of amulets. 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir narrates that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "If anyone wears an amulet, may Allah not help him in fulfilling his wish. If anyone wears a sea-shell around his neck, may Allah give him no peace." [31]

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[27] Tirmidhi.

[28] Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi, who says it is a *hasan* (good) hadith. Al-Hakim says that it is sound according to Bukhari's criteria.

[29] Bukhari.

[30] Muslim.

[31] Narrated by Ahmad and Al-Hakim who consider it a sound hadith.

An amulet (*tamimah*) is a string of shells or beads that the Arabs used to put around their children's necks, believing that it would protect them from the evil eye. Islam abolished this superstitious practice. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, prayed against those who wore an amulet out of superstitious belief.

It is reported from Ibn Mas'ud that "once, when he entered his home, he noticed his wife wearing a knotted object round her neck. He took it away and broke it. Then he remarked: 'The family of 'Abdullah has become so arrogant that they now associate with Allah those for whom He has sent down no authority.' Then, he added: 'I have heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying: 'Verily, incantations, amulets, and love charms are acts of *shirk* (associating false gods with Allah).' The people said: 'O Abu Abdullah! We are familiar with incantations and amulets, but what is a love charm (*al-tawlah*)?'He replied: 'It is a sort of magical formula by which women sought to gain their husbands' love'." [32] 'Imran ibn Hasin reports that "the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saw a man wearing a bracelet of copper on his arm. The Prophet, peace be upon him, exclaimed to him: 'Woe be to you! What is this?' The man replied: 'I am suffering from weakness *(al-wahinah)*.'[33] The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'It will give you nothing but pain. Throw it away. Had you died while wearing it, you would never have achieved salvation'."[34] 'Isa ibn Hamza said: "I went to see 'Abdullah ibn Hakim and his face was red due to high fever. I said to him: 'Why don't you use an amulet?' He said: 'We seek refuge with Allah from it. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "Whoever wears anything as an amulet will be entrusted to it".'" [35]

Pendants with Words from the Qur'an or Hadith

'Amr ibn Shu'aib relates from his father and from his grandfather, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If one of you is frightened while sleeping, one should say:

A'udhu billah min hamazatish shayatin wa an yahdrun «أعوذ بالله من همزات الشياطين وأن يحضرون»

'I seek refuge in Allah's perfect words from His anger, His chastisement, from the evil of His creatures, and from the suggestions and approach of devils.' Then one will never be harmed." 'Amr ibn Shu'aib related further that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr "used to teach this prayer to his older sons who could

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[32] Related by Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban, and both consider it a *sahih* hadith.

[33] *Al-wahinah* is a disease that causes pain in the shoulders and hands. The man was wearing a copper bracelet believing it would relieve his pain and suffering. The Prophet, peace be upon him, prohibited him from wearing it because he regarded it as an amulet.

[34] Narrated by Ahmad.

[35] Abu Daw'ud.

comprehend and memorize. For those who were not able to do so, he wrote these words down, wrapped them as pendants, and made them wear these around their necks."[36]

'Aishah, Malik, and most of the scholars of the schools of Ash-Shafi'i and Ahmad ibn Hanbal also subscribe to this view. Nevertheless Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Mas'ud, scholars of the Hanafi school, and some scholars of the Ash-Shafi'i and Hanbali schools, according to one study, are of the opinion that it is not permissible for a person to wear anything as an amulet in the light of the above mentioned general prohibition regarding amulets.

Prohibition of Someone with a Contagious Disease Living Among the Healthy

Anyone with a contagious disease may be prohibited from living among healthy people. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "A sick person must not be brought among the healthy." The Prophet, peace be upon him, prohibited the owner of sick camels from mixing them with the healthy ones of another owner, even though he also stated: "No contagious disease is transmitted without Allah's permission, nor is there any bad omen." It is also reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, accepted the oath of allegiance from a leper from outside Madinah and did not permit him to enter the city.

Prohibition of Entering Or Leaving a Plague-Stricken Area

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, forbade people to leave or enter a land where there is a plague, in order to check the spread of the contagious disease and confine it to a limited area. In medical terminology this is known as "quarantine." Usamah ibn Zaid said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, remarked in reference to the plague, 'It is a remnant of the chastisement inflicted upon the Israelites. If a plague breaks out in a place where you are, do not leave that place, and when you hear of its spread in another place, do not go there."[37]

Ibn 'Abbas reports: "'Umar ibn al-Khattab went to Al-Sham (Syria). When he reached Sargh, the army commanders, Abu Obaidah ibn al-Jarrah, and others received him. They informed him that a plague had broken out in Al-Sham."Ibn Abbas continued, "'Umar assembled the leaders from among the Muhajirin and sought their opinions. They offered conflicting opinions. Some said: 'We have come for a certain objective, and so we should not turn back from it.' Others said: 'With you are others, including some companions of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. We do not believe that you should expose them to this plague.' 'Umar said: 'You may leave.'Then he

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[36] Narrated by Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, and Tirmidhi, who says it is an acceptable but unknown hadith. Al-Hakim says it is sound.

[37] Narrated by Tirmidhi, who considers it a sound hadith.

gathered together the Ansar and asked their opinion. They were unanimous in their advice to him. They said: 'We believe that you should return with the people and you should not expose them to the plague.' Then 'Umar addressed the people, announced that he was going back the next morning, and asked them to be prepared to leave in the morning.' At this Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah said: 'O 'Umar! Are you running away from the decree of Allah!' 'Umar replied: 'O Abu Ubaidah! I wish someone else had said this. Yes, we do run from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah. What if you had a herd of camels and you took them to a valley that had two slopes, one green pasturage and the other dry and barren. Would you not be fulfilling the decree of Allah if you let your herd graze on the green pasture rather than keeping them on the dry barren land?' Just then came Abdurrahman ibn 'Awf. He had been away on some errand. He said: 'I have some knowledge concerning this issue. I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, say: "If you hear that an epidemic has broken out in a land, do not approach it. If it attacks a land where you live, then do not leave that land in a bid to escape from it".' Hearing this 'Umar praised Allah and then he departed. This is reported by Bukhari.

Chapter Two

CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH AND PREPARATION FOR IT BY GOOD DEEDS

Allah and His Messenger, peace be upon him, encourage us to contemplate death and be ready for it with good deeds. This is regarded as a sign of goodness. Ibn 'Umar reports: "I came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and I was the tenth of the first ten people (who embraced Islam). A man from among the Ansar got up and said: "O Prophet of Allah, who is the most sagacious and the most prudent among the people?" He replied: "Those who are most aware of death and prepare themselves for it. They are the wisest of people and will have honor in this world and a generous reward in the Hereafter'." Ibn 'Umar also said that Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said: "You should remember the reality that brings an end to all worldly joys and pleasures, namely, death." [38]

Ibn Mas'ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, explained the following words of Allah, the Exalted: "The hearts of those whom Allah wills to guide, He opens to Islam." [39] This means, the Messenger explained, that, "When the light (of truth) enters the heart it expands and opens up." The Companions asked: "Is there any evidence of this (in the life of a Muslim)?" He replied: "Being ever mindful of the eternal life of the Hereafter, and remaining at guard in this life of delusion, and preparing oneself for death before it comes." This is reported by Ibn Jarir through different chains each of which strengthens the other.

It is not proper for a Person to Wish for Death

It is *makruh* or "disliked" to wish for one's death, or pray to Allah for it, due to poverty, distress, illness, or the like. The six canonical compilers of

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[38] Both ahadith are narrated by At-Tabarani with a sound chain of narrators.

[39] Qur'an 6:125

hadith narrate on the authority of Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Let no one among you wish for death due to any hardship that may befall him. But if one has no other choice, but to do so, one should say: "O Allah! Grant me life as long as life is good for me, and cause me to die when death is better for me."

The wisdom in the prohibition against wishing for death becomes obvious from a hadith narrated by Umm al-Fadl: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, went to see Al-'Abbas. He found him wishing for death. Thereupon the Prophet said: 'O Abbas! O Uncle of Allah's Messenger! Do not wish for death. If you do good and live long, your good deeds will multiply. Then that is better for you. If you are not good and your death is delayed, you may seek Allah's forgiveness. That is better for you. So do not wish for death'."[40]

It is permissible, however, to wish for death, and there is no harm in doing so, when one fears persecution that puts one's faith at risk, as is indicated by the following supplication of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him:

Allahumma inni as'aluka fi'lal khairat wa tarkal munkarat wa hubbal masakin wa an taghfarali wa tarhamani wa idha aradata fitnatan fi qaumi fatawafani ghaira maftunin wa as'aluka hubbaka wa hubba man yuhibbuka wa hubba 'amalin yuqaribu ila hubbika

«اللهم إني أسألك فعل الخيرات وترك المنكرات وحب المساكين وأن تغفر لي وترحمني وإذا أردت فتنة في قومي فتوفني غير مفتون ، وأسألك حبك وحب من يحبك وحب عمل يقرب إلى حبك»

"O Allah! I ask You for the means to do good, to avoid evil, and to love the poor, and I beseech You to forgive me and have mercy on me. When You subject my people to a trial, cause me to die without being affected by it. O Allah! I ask Your love, the love of those who love You, and the love of all such actions that bring one closer to Your Love."[41]

'Umar used to pray in these words:

Allahumma kabirat sinni wa da'ufat quwwati wa anshrat ra'i-ati faqbidni ilaika ghaira mudayi' wa la mufaratti

«اللهم كبرت سني وضعفت قوتي وانتشرت رعيتي فاقبضني إليك غير مضيع ولا مفرط»

"O Allah! I have grown old, I have become weak, and my flock has spread far and wide. Therefore, O Allah, take me to You before I fall short of doing my duties or transgress my limits." This is reported by Malik.

Excellence of a Long Life Enriched with Good Deeds

It is reported by Abdurrahman ibn Abu Bakrah on the authority of his father that a man asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Who is the best of all people?" He replied, "He who lives long and does good deeds." The man asked, "And

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[40] Narrated by Ahmad and Al-Hakim, who says it is sound according to Muslim's criteria.
[41] Narrated by Tirmidhi who said it is a good and sound hadith.

who is the worst of men?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied: "He who lives long but commits evil." [42] Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Shall I tell you who is the best among you?" The Companions said, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger." Thereupon he said, "The best among you are those who live long and are best in deeds." [43]

Good Deeds Prior to Death: An Indication of a Good End

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When Allah intends good for a servant of His, He uses him for good." They asked: "How does Allah use him?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied: "He enables him to do good deeds and makes it easy for him before his death and then causes him to die while he is in that state of goodness." [44]

Desirability of Having a Good Opinion about Allah

The patient should remember the boundless mercy of Allah and have a good opinion about his Sustainer. Jabir reported: "I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying, three nights before his death, 'Let none of you die unless he has a good opinion of Allah'." [45] This hadith encourages the triumph of hope and expectation of forgiveness when one meets Allah, the Exalted. One should be in the state most loved by Allah, since He is the most Gracious, the most Merciful, the most Beneficent, and the most Generous. He loves to forgive those with hope. In the words of a hadith: "Everyone will be raised on the Resurrection Day in the condition in which he died."

It is reported by Anas that "the Prophet, peace be upon him, went to see a young man who was on his deathbed. The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked him: 'How are you?' The young man said: 'I hope for Allah's pardon, but I am fearful because of my sins.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'These two things never gather in the heart of a person at such a time without Allah granting him what he hopes for and sheltering him from what he dreads'."[46]

Desirability of Supplications and Remembrance of Allah for Those Visiting Someone on his Deathbed

It is desirable that righteous people visit patients on their deathbeds and remember Allah.

Umm Salamah reported: "Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said, 'When you visit someone who is ill or is dying, say good things about him. Indeed, the angels (present there) say "amen" to whatever you utter'." She

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[42] Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi, who says it is a sound hadith.

[43] Narrated by Ahmad and others with a sound chain.

[44] Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Al-Hakim, and Ibn Hibban.

[45] Muslim.

[46] Ibn Majah and Tirmidhi.

added: "When Abu Salamah passed away, I went to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, 'Oh Messenger of Allah! Indeed, Abu Salamah has died.' The Prophet said: 'Say:

«اللهم اغفر لي وله ، وأعقبني منه عُقبى حسنة»

"O Allah! Forgive me and him. Give me in his place a better substitute".' So, I did so and Allah gave me someone better than he. He gave me Muhammad, peace be upon him."[47]

In another report she said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, came to see Abu Salamah when his sight had become fixed (he had passed away). So the Prophet, peace be upon him, closed his eyes and said: 'When the soul is seized and it leaves the body, the sight follows it.' Some of Abu Salamah's family wept and wailed, whereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Supplicate to Allah only to seek good for yourselves, because the angels (who are present) say "amen" to whatever you utter.' Then he said:

«اللهم اغفر لأبي سلمة وارفع درجته في المهديين ، وأخلفه في عقبة الغابرين واغفر لنا وله يا رب العالمين ، وأفسح له في قبره ، ونور له فيه»

'O Allah! Forgive Abu Salamah; raise his station among (Your) rightly guided servants; and take good care of his family that he has left behind. O Lord of the Worlds! Forgive him and us, make his grave spacious, and put light therein for him'."[48]

What Should be Done When Someone Dies

It is sunnah to do the following when a person dies:

1) Advise the dying person to say: "*La ilaha illa-Allah*" (there is no god but Allah). It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Prompt your dying people to say: '*La ilaha illa-Allah*'."[49] Another report on the authority of Mu'adh ibn Jabal states that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "He whose last words are '*La ilaha illa- Allah*' shall enter Paradise." [50]

This prompting (*talqin*) is necessary only when the dying person is unable to utter the *shahadah (La ilaha illa- Allah* . . .). If such a person is able to utter these words then there is no need for prompting, but he should rather be advised to do so. Such advice is useful in cases of persons who are in possession of their faculties of reason and speech. If one is already mentally impaired such advice cannot be of benefit. But one who is unable to speak might say these words

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47 Recorded by Ahmad, Muslim, and the five compilers of the sunan.
48 Muslim.
49 Muslim, Abu Daw'ud. Tirmidhi.
50 Narrated by Abu Daw'ud; Al-Hakim considers it a sound hadith.

in his heart. The scholars are of the opinion that no pressure should be put on the dying person. So one should not say to him, "Say, '*La ilaha ill-Allah*'," lest he should become annoyed and utter something improper. One may say the *shahadah*, however, in such a way that the dying person might be able to hear it and repeat it. If he utters it once, he should not be asked to repeat it unless he says some words after it. In such a case he should be asked to repeat *shahadah* to ensure that it be his last utterance.

Most scholars are of the opinion that one attending a dying person may repeat only the words: "*La ilaha ill-Allah*," according to the apparent meaning of the hadith. Others are of the opinion that the dying person should be prompted to utter the two testimonies (that is, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger"). The purpose is to remind him of the Oneness of Allah, which includes both of the two testimonies.

2) Lay the dying person so that the *qibla* is on his right side. To this effect it is recorded that Abu Qatadah said: "Upon arrival in Madinah, the Prophet, peace be upon him, enquired about a person called al-Bara ibn Ma'rur. The people told the Prophet, peace be upon him, that he had died, and had willed one-third of his property to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and that his face be turned toward the Ka'bah at the time of his death. Hearing this, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'He has been true to his innate nature. I return the one-third of his property to his children.' Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, left and offered a prayer for him and prayed, saying: 'O Allah! Forgive him, have mercy on him, and cause him to enter Your Paradise. Indeed, You have accepted this prayer'."[51]

Ahmad reported that Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, peace be upon him, at the time of her death, turned toward the Ka'bah and placed her right hand under her head. This is the sleeping position recommended by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and in a grave, a dead body should also be placed in the same position. A report recorded from Ash-Shafi'i says: The body of the deceased should be laid flat on his back with his feet toward the Ka'bah, and his face raised a little, facing it. The majority of scholars, however favor the first position and hold it to be preferable.

3) Recite Surah Ya Sin from the Qur'an [52]. This is reported by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, Al-Hakim, and Ibn Hibban, and the last two of them grade it as a sound hadith. They report also on the authority of M'aqil ibn Yasar, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Ya Sin is the heart of the Qur'an. Whoever recites it seeking the pleasure of Allah and the hereafter will receive Allah's forgiveness. So recite it to your dead."[53]

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[51] Narrated by Al-Baihaqi and Al-Hakim, who observes: "I know of no hadith, other than this one, with regard to turning the face of a dying person toward Ka'bah."

[52]. Surah 36 of the Qur'an.

[53]. Ibn al-Qattan considers this hadith weak and manifests some confusion, doubt, and even ignorance about some of its narrators. Ad-Dar al-Qutni is reported to have said: "In the chain of narrators of this hadith there is confusion. Its text is obscure and is not correct."

Ibn Hibban observes: This hadith refers to the recitation of Ya Sin for those on the eve of death and not for those already dead. This interpretation is supported by Ahmad, who recorded in his *Al-Musnad* that Safwan states: "The most eminent scholars say: 'The recitation of Surah *Ya Sin* at the time of a person's death makes death easy for him'." The compiler of *Musnad al-Firdaus* attributes this hadith to Abu ad-Darda and Abu Dharr. They both narrated: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'If any person is on his deathbed and Ya Sin is recited to him, Allah makes his suffering easier'."

4) Close the eyes of the deceased. It is narrated by Muslim that the Prophet, peace be upon him, went to visit Abu Salmah. He saw that his eyes were wide open and blank with the stare of death. So the Prophet, peace be upon him, closed his eyes and said: "Verily, when a soul is seized, the eyesight follows it."

5) Cover the deceased: 'Aishah said: "When the Messenger of Allah died, he was covered with a piece of cloth that had some designs on it." This is reported by Bukhari and Muslim. The objective here is clearly to safeguard the respect and dignity of the deceased in death against prying eyes and against the exposure of his or her body to the idle curiosity of those looking for changes in its physical condition and features.

There is a consensus among scholars regarding the permissibility of kissing a dead person. The Prophet, peace be upon him, kissed 'Uthman ibn Maz'un after his death. Similarly, when the Prophet died, Abu Bakr leaned over him and kissed him between his eyes saying: "O my Prophet! O my best friend!!"

6) Prepare the body for burial without delay, as soon as death is confirmed (by specialists i. e., a qualified physician or the like).

The guardian of the deceased should wash, wrap, and arrange for the burial of the body soon after the funeral prayer for the deceased, because the body might deteriorate if burial is delayed. This is based on a report, recorded by Abu Daw'ud from al-Husayn ibn Wujuh that when Talhah ibn al-Bara fell ill, the Prophet, peace upon him, said: "I see that Talhah is on the verge of death. Inform me about him (when he passes away) and make immediate preparations for his burial, for a Muslim's remains should not be left long with his family after his death."

The burial may be delayed only for the guardian, provided no physical deterioration in the condition of the body is feared from such delay. Ahmad and Tirmidhi report on the authority of Ali ibn Abu Talib that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "O Ali, never delay three things: prayer when its time approaches, the funeral when death is confirmed, and marrying a widow or a divorcee when a suitable match is found for her."

7) Settle the debt of the deceased. Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and Tirmidhi have recorded a hadith on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah said: "A believer's soul remains in suspense until all his debts are paid off." Tirmidhi considers this a sound hadith.

This means that the judgement regarding a soul's salvation or perdition or

its entry into Paradise is held in abeyance until its debts are fully paid off and settled. This applies to a person who leaves some property upon his death. His debt should be paid out of the property that he leaves behind. In the case of a person who dies in debt which he sincerely intended to pay, but has no property (nor leaves any behind to pay his debt), according to a confirmed report, his debt will be settled by Allah, the Exalted. Concerning a person who dies in debt with sufficient means to pay it and was willing to do so, but his heirs do not pay it, Bukhari records on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If anyone takes other people's money with the intention to repay it and then he or she should die without settling the debt, Allah will pay the debt on his behalf. And if anyone takes money or property (of others) with the intention of destroying it, Allah will destroy him."

A hadith recorded by Ahmad, Abu Nu'aym, Al-Bazzar, and At-Tabarani from the Prophet, peace be upon him, says: "The debtor will be summoned before Allah on the Day of Judgement. Then Allah will ask him: 'O Son of Adam! Why did you incur debt and infringe on others' rights?' The man would reply: 'My Lord! You know I took it, but I neither abused nor lost it. It was stolen or burned in a fire or lost its value.' Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, will say: 'My slave has told the truth, and I am more entitled (than anyone else) to settle his debt. Then Allah will issue a command and something will be placed on his scales causing his good deeds to outweigh his bad ones. And so, by Allah's Grace, he will enter Paradise'."

The Prophet, peace be upon him, did not perform funeral prayers for those who had died in debt. When, however, Allah the Almighty, granted him certain lands as a result of conquests, and the community's wealth increased, he offered funeral prayer for them and settled their debts.

Bukhari reports that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "I am nearer to the believers than their own selves. So if someone dies leaving behind debt, but no wherewithal to settle it, we shall pay his debt, and if someone dies and leaves some estate behind him, it is for his heirs (to pay his debt)."

This hadith shows that the debt of a deceased Muslim may be paid from the public exchequer out of the *zakah* funds specified as the portion for the people in debt. This is one of the prescribed categories of *zakah* recipients. Death by itself does not annul one's debt or other responsibilities to the living.

On invoking Allah upon witnessing Death, and saying: "Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un"[54]

A believer should, at the death of a relative or a friend, invoke Allah and say: "Verily we belong to Allah, and truly to Him shall we return." The following reports show that to do so is commendable.

Ahmad and Muslim reported from Umm Salmah that she said: "I heard the

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[54]We belong to Allah and truly to Him we shall Return

Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: "If a servant of Allah is afflicted with a misfortune and says:

«إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون. اللهم أجرني في مصيبتي وأخلف لي خيراً منها»

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. Allahumma ajirni fi musibati wa akhlif li khairan minha 'Verily we belong to Allah and truly to Him shall we return. O Allah! Protect me in this calamity that has befallen me and replace it with something better.' Allah will accept his prayer, grant him reward for his affliction, and replace it with something better." She added: "When Abu Salmah (her husband) died, I invoked Allah in the words taught to me by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and Allah did grant me someone better than he, i. e. , (He gave me) the Messenger of Allah (as a husband)."

Tirmidhi reports from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When a child of a servant of Allah passes away, Allah says to the angels: 'Did you take the soul of My servant's child?' They say: 'Yes.' He, the Almighty, says: 'Did you take away the apple of my servant's eye?' They say: 'Yes.' He, the Almighty says: 'What did My servant say at this?' They say: 'He praised You and said: "*Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'a un* (Verily we belong to Allah and to Him shall we return)." At this Allah says: 'Build for My servant a mansion in Paradise and call it the House of Praise (*bayt al-hamd*)'." Tirmidhi says this is a sound hadith.

Bukhari has reported from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah, the Exalted and Glorious says: 'I have no better reward than Paradise for a believing servant of Mine who is patient and resigned when I take away one of his beloved, one among those he most cherishes in the world."

"Those who say, when afflicted with calamity 'To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return,' are those on whom descend blessings from Allah, and mercy, and they are the ones who receive guidance."[55] Commenting on these verses of the Qur'an, Ibn Abbas said: "Allah, the Almighty and the Exalted, informs us that when a believer is patient and resigned after a misfortune visits him and invokes Allah, Allah will grant him three (good) merits: blessings, mercy, and guidance to the right path."

Informing the Deceased's Family and Friends

The scholars consider it desirable that the deceased's family, friends, and other good people be informed about his death, so that they may share in the reward of participating in his funeral. It is reported in *Sihah Sittah* on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, informed his companions about the death of Negus (Najashi), the King of Abyssinia, the day that he passed away. And then the Prophet, peace be upon him, led them to the prayer ground where he lined them up and offered funeral prayer (for him) with four *takbirs*.

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[55]Qur'an:2:156-157

Ahmad and Bukhari narrate from Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, informed the people about the death of his companions, Zaid, J'afar, and Ibn Rawahah, commanders of the Muslim army in the Battle of *Mu'tah*, before they received any news from the battlefield. Tirmidhi observes that there is no harm in informing the family and close relations of the deceased person about his death. Al-Baihaqi says he was told that Malik ibn Anas disliked announcing someone's death at the gates of the mosque, but found nothing wrong with going around inside the mosque to the various groups of students there and informing them of someone's death.

A report, recorded by Ahmad and Tirmidhi on the authority of Hudhaifah, says that Hudhaifah said: "When I pass away, let no one vex me, for I am afraid (my death will be announced) and it may be regarded (as an invitation to) mourning. And I heard that the Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade announcing the death of a person as an invitation to mourning. This refers to a practice of the pre-Islamic period. In those days when a noble died they would send a horseman to various tribes to inform them about his death saying: 'The people are devastated on account of the death of so and so.' Such an announcement was (always) accompanied by crying and weeping."

Weeping Over the Dead

Muslim scholars are agreed that weeping for the dead is permissible, whereas crying and wailing are not. It is reported in a sound hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah does not punish a person for shedding tears or feeling pain in his heart. But He does punish, though he may show mercy, because of (what he utters with) this," and then he pointed to his tongue.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, wept on the death of his son, Ibrahim, and said: "The eyes shed tears and the heart feels pain, but we utter only what pleases our Lord. O Ibrahim! We are aggrieved at your demise." He also wept when his grand daughter, Umaymah, daughter of Zainab, died. At this Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah said: "O Messenger of Allah! Are you weeping? Did you not forbid Zainab from weeping?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied: "This (weeping) is the mercy that Allah has placed in the hearts of His servants. And surely Allah bestows mercy upon those who are merciful among His servants." A report is transmitted by At-Tabarani on the authority of Abdullah ibn Zaid to the effect that weeping without wailing is permitted.

Weeping aloud and wailing cause pain and suffering to the dead person. It is reported from Ibn 'Umar that when 'Umar was stabbed and he became unconscious the people around him began crying loudly. When he regained consciousness he said to them: "Don't you know that the Messenger of Allah said: 'A dead person is tormented by the wailing of the living'."

Abu Musa reports that when 'Umar was wounded Suhaib cried: "O my dear brother!" At this 'Umar said: "O Suhaib! Don't you know that the Messenger of Allah said: 'A dead person is tormented by the wailing of the living people'."

Al-Mughirah ibn Sh'ubah reports that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: "The one who is wailed for is tortured on account of it." The above ahadith are reported by Bukhari and Muslim.

These ahadith mean that a dead person feels pain and displeasure when his family wails over him, for he hears their wailing and their deeds are shown to him. This does not mean that the dead are actually punished and tormented because of the wailing of their families for them, because the Qur'an says that a person is not accountable for the actions of others.

Ibn Jarir reported from Abu Hurairah that he said: "Your deeds are shown to your dead relatives. So if these are good, they are pleased, and if these are bad, they despise them."

Ahmad and Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Your deeds are shown to your dead relatives and kinsfolk. So if these are good they are pleased, and if these are bad they say: 'O Allah! Let them not die until You have guided them to the right path as You guided us before'."

An-N'uman ibn Bashir reports: "Abdullah ibn Rawahah fainted and his sister, 'Amrah, started wailing: 'O my monumental loss!' 'O, my this and that!' When he regained consciousness, he said to her: 'Every time you said something (about me) I was asked, "Are you really what she said?"'." This is narrated by Bukhari.

Wailing over the Dead

Wailing refers to mourning in a loud voice and crying in a high pitch, which was prohibited by the Prophet, peace be upon him, . Abu Malik al-Ash'ari reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Four practices of the pre-Islamic days of Ignorance will continue to be practiced by my ummah: taking pride in one's parentage, giving a person a father other than his own genealogical father, believing that rain is caused by some stars, and wailing over the dead." He further said: "A (professional) mourner,[56] unless she repents before her death, will be raised on the Day of Judgement wearing a garment of tar and an armor of blistering puss." This is narrated by Ahmad and Muslim.

Umm 'Atiyyah reports: "The Messenger of Allah made us pledge that we will not wail over (the dead)" (Bukhari and Muslim).

Al-Bazzar has transmitted, through a sound chain of authorities the report that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Two sounds are accursed in this world and in the hereafter: the sound of wind instruments (to celebrate) good fortune, and of moaning aloud when afflicted with a misfortune."

Abu Musa is reported to have said: "I declare my disavowal of all that Allah's Messenger disavowed. The Messenger of Allah disavowed publically a woman who mourns loudly, one who shaves her head, and one who tears

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[56] Or a woman hired to mourn the death of a person.

her clothes in mourning" (Bukhari and Muslim).

Ahmad narrates from Anas that he said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, made the women pledge, while giving their allegiance to him, not to mourn loudly for the dead. Thereupon they asked him, 'O Messenger of Allah, some women helped us (in mourning our dead) during the pre-Islamic days. Should we (also in return) help them (in mourning their dead) now that we are Muslims?' He replied: 'There is no such thing in Islam (i. e., helping each other to mourn the dead loudly)'."

Mourning for a Deceased

It is permissible for a woman to mourn for a period of three days on the death of a near relative, provided that her husband does not object to her doing so. It is not permissible for her to mourn for more than three days, except in the case of her husband's death, when she is to mourn for four months and ten days,. which is a legally prescribed period of waiting or "*iddah*". This is reported by the group,[57] except Tirmidhi. They report from Umm 'Atiyyah, that the Messenger of Allah said: "A woman should not mourn for any deceased person for more than three days, except in the case of her husband's death, which she may mourn for a period of four months and ten days. Such a woman (in mourning) is not to wear any (brightly) colored dress. She may wear only plain dress. During this period she should not use any adornment or eye make-up, nor wear any perfume, nor dye her hands and feet with henna, nor comb her hair, except at the end of her menstruation period, when she may use some cleaning or refreshing agents (such as perfume, etc.) to get rid of any offensive smell left over from her period." Accordingly, when a widow mourns, she must not use any adornment, such as jewelry, *kohl*,[58] silk, perfume, or henna dye on her hands and feet. A widow must observe this waiting period in deference to her late husband's memory and to fulfill her obligations toward him.

Preparing Food for the Bereaved Family is Encouraged

Abdullah ibn Ja'far reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "Prepare some food for the family of Ja'far, for what has befallen them is keeping them preoccupied." This is narrated by Abu Daw'ud, Ibn Majah and Tirmidhi, who grades it as a sound hadith.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, recommended this practice for it is an act of virtue and kindness and brings friends and neighbors closer to each other.

Ash-Shafi'i said: "It is recommended that the relatives of the deceased prepare enough food to feed all the deceased's family for one day and night, for it is the *sunnah* of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and a practice of good

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[57]. The compilers of the six most reliable hadith books generally known as *Sihah Sitta*.

[58]. Pulverized antimony used for darkening (the edges of) the eyelids; a kind of eye-makeup.

people."

The scholars hold it commendable to urge the deceased's family to eat so that their sorrow or excessive grief will not cause them to avoid food and thereby become weak.

These scholars also hold that to offer food to the women while they are mourning loudly is not permissible, for it would be helping them in something sinful.

All the schools of Islamic law disapprove of the deceased's family preparing food for the people coming to pay their condolences, for it adds to their grief and further encumbers them unnecessarily. Such a practice would also resemble the custom of the Arabs before Islam. Referring to this practice, Jarir says: "(In those days) we considered it a part of mourning to assemble at the deceased's house and prepare food after burial for those gathered there." Some scholars consider this to be absolutely forbidden (*haram*).

Ibn Qudamah observes: "It is permissible, however, when there is genuine need for it, since sometimes people attending the funeral may be from distant places, and they have to stay with the family of the deceased, in which case the family has to host such guests.

Preparing the *Kafan* (Shroud) and Grave Before Death

Bukhari deals with this subject in a chapter entitled: "Those Who Prepared the *Kafan* in the Prophet's Days without him objecting to it. Reporting on the authority of Sahl, Bukhari says: "A woman came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, with a woven piece of cloth that had two seams on its edges. She said: 'I wove it with my own hands in order to wear it.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, took it because he needed it. He wrapped it around his waist so that it covered the lower half of his body, and he came toward us. A man praised it, saying: 'This is a very nice cloth! Why don't you give it to me to wear?' Some of the people present there reproached the man for they knew that the Prophet needed that cloth and that he never denied anyone's request. The man replied: 'By Allah, I asked him for it not to wear it, but to save it and use it as my *kafan*'." Sahl continues: "And (later when he died) that same piece of cloth was used as his *kafan*."

Commenting on the above chapter of Bukhari, Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar says: "Bukhari phrased it so as to show that though (initially) the companions disliked the man's request for the cloth from the Prophet, they did not disapprove of it when he explained to them the reason for his request. This proves that it is permissible for a person to arrange during his lifetime for the things he will need after his death, such as a *kafan* or a grave." He cites Ibn Battal who said it is permissible to arrange for something before it is actually needed. Furthermore Al-Hafiz observes: "Some righteous people did indeed have their graves dug and prepared for them during their lifetime." Al-Zain ibn al-Munir criticized him, saying that the companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not do so, and that if doing so (preparing one's grave during

one's lifetime) were desirable most of them would have done so.

Commenting on this Al-'Aini says: "The fact that it was not done by the companions of the Prophet does not imply that doing so is not permissible, for if an act is deemed good by Muslims, then it is also good in the sight of Allah, especially when it is practiced by some of the most pious scholars."

Ahmad said: "There is nothing wrong if a person purchases a site for his burial and makes a will to the effect that he is to be buried there. 'Uthman, 'Aishah, and 'Umar ibn Abd al-'Aziz, all did so."

The Desire to Die in the *Haramain* [59]

The desire to die in either of the sanctuaries in Makkah and Madinah is commendable. Bukhari has reported on the authority of Hafsah that 'Umar said: "O Allah! Grant me martyrdom in Your cause, and cause me to die in the city of Your Prophet, peace be upon him." Thereupon Hafsa asked him: "Why do you pray for such a thing?" He said: "Allah willing, I shall get what I have prayed for."

At-Tabarani reported on the authority of Jabir that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "He who dies in one of the two sanctuaries will be raised in peace on the Day of Resurrection." Among the narrators of this hadith are Musa ibn Abdul al-Rahman, who is mentioned as trustworthy by Ibn Hibban and Abdullah ibn al-Mu'amil. Ahmad regards the hadith as weak, while Ibn Hibban considers it sound.

Sudden Death

Abu Daw'ud reported from 'Ubaid ibn Khalid al-Sullami, a companion of the Prophet, peace be upon him, that once he narrated from 'Ubaid and another time from the Prophet himself, peace be upon him, saying: "Being caught unawares by a sudden death is a grievous misfortune."[60] This hadith has been reported by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Anas ibn Malik, Abu Hurairah and 'Aishah, but all these narrations are weak for one or another reason. Al-Azdi says: This hadith has been reported through diverse chains of narrators, but none are reported on sound authority from the Prophet, peace be upon him.

The Reward of a Person Losing a Child

Bukhari reported from Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "A Muslim who loses three of his children before they come of age will be brought to Paradise by Allah as a mercy to him for losing them."

Bukhari and Muslim reported from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri that he said:

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[59] Sacred precincts around the Ka'aba in Makkah and the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah.

[60] A misfortune, because men dislike sudden death, since it deprives one of the reward for the suffering during illness that serves to cleanse sins and to afford an opportunity to repent and do good.

"Some women asked the Prophet, peace be upon him: 'Appoint a (separate) day to (admonish) us.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, told them: 'If a (Muslim) woman's three children die, they will be a protection for her from Hell.' A woman asked him, 'And what if two of her children die?' He replied: 'And (even) if two of her children die'."

The Life-Span of Muslims

Tirmidhi reported from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "The life-span of those in my *ummah* is 60 to 70 years. And a very few of them will exceed this span."

Death: A Form of Rest

Bukhari and Muslim reported from Abu Qatadah that once, when the Prophet passed by a funeral, he said: "He is (now) in peace secure from others and others are in peace secure from him." The people asked: "O Allah's Messenger! Who is in peace and from whom are others in peace?" He said: "A believing servant (of Allah) is relieved from afflictions of this world upon his death, while upon the death of a wicked person, other people, land, trees, and animals are rid of his evil."

Preparation for the Burial of the Dead

The body of the deceased person must be prepared for burial, washed, and shrouded, and a funeral prayer must be offered for him. Then he should be buried.

Washing the Dead

The majority of jurists are of the opinion that washing the body of a dead Muslim is a *fard kifayah* or a collective obligation. If some people attend to it, it is done on behalf of all, as commanded by Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, and practiced by the Muslim community.

Who is to be Washed and Who is Not

The body of a deceased Muslim, other than one killed in a battlefield by the infidels, should be washed.

Washing Severed Parts of a Body

There is a difference of opinion among Muslim jurists concerning washing parts severed from a body.

According to Ash-Shafi'i, Ahmad and Ibn Hazm these parts must be

washed and shrouded, and funeral prayer should be offered for the departed soul.

Ash-Shafi'i said: "We were informed that a bird dropped a (human) hand in Makkah after the Battle of the Camel. The people identified it by a ring on one of its fingers.[61] It was washed and a (funeral) prayer was offered on it. This was witnessed by many Companions alive at the time.

Ahmad said: Abu Ayub offered funeral prayer on a (severed) foot of a dead person, while 'Umar offered prayer on a dead man's bones.

Ibn Hazm said: "A funeral prayer may be offered on any organ found from a dead Muslim's body. It should be washed and shrouded, except when it is part of a martyr's body." Ibn Hazm further remarks that offering prayer on any organ found from a Muslim's body is analogous to praying for the whole person of the deceased, namely, for body and soul.

Abu Hanifah and Malik say, however, that, "If more than half of a Muslim's body is found, then it should be washed and funeral prayer be offered on it, but otherwise it should not be washed nor should any funeral prayer be offered on it.

A Martyr does not need to be Washed

The body of a martyr, that is, a Muslim killed in a battle at the hands of disbelievers, may not be washed even though it is in a state of major ritual impurity. His body should be enshrouded in the clothes he wore when he died if they are good enough for the purpose. Otherwise some additional cloth may be used to enshroud his body according to the *sunnah*. The body of such a person should be buried in its blood-stained state. None of his blood should be washed off.

Ahmad reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Do not wash those who die as martyrs, for their every wound or drop of blood will exude a fragrance like musk on the Day of Judgement." The Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered the martyrs of the Battle of Uhud to be buried in their blood-stained clothes. They were not washed, nor any funeral prayer offered for them.

Ash-Shafi'i said: "Burying the martyrs without washing or offering funeral prayer on them may be explained by the fact that they shall meet Allah with their wounds exuding fragrance like musk. The honor bestowed on them by Allah frees them from the need for funeral prayers by others. Moreover it makes things easier for the surviving Muslims, who may have received injuries in battle and fear the enemy's attack, and may be concerned about the security of their families and their families' worries about them.

It is said that the wisdom behind not offering a funeral prayer on a martyr is that it is offered for a dead person, whereas a martyr is not dead but alive. Another reason may be that since prayer is a kind of intercession, the martyrs do not need it. In fact they will intercede for others.

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[61] It was the hand of Abdul al-Rahman ibn 'Itab ibn Usayd (probably killed in the battle). Ed

The Martyrs whose Bodies must be Washed and for whom Funeral Prayer must be Performed

Those who are not killed in a battle by disbelievers, though they may be regarded as martyrs in Islamic law, should be washed and funeral prayer said for them.

The bodies of such martyrs, during the Prophet's time, were washed. Later on Muslims, during the days of 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali, continued this practice (washing the bodies of sucn martyrs). We give below details about these martyrs.

Jabir ibn 'Utaik reported that Allah's Messenger said: "There are seven kinds of martyrs besides those killed in the cause of Allah: 1) a person who is killed in an epidemic, 2) a person who is drowned, 3) a person who has bed sores that cause fever and a bad cough resulting in his death, 4) a person who dies of a stomach disease, 5) a person who dies in a fire, 6) a person who dies under falling debris (in a disaster), and 7) a woman who dies during childbirth." Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud and Nasa'i report this hadith based on sound authority.

Abu Hurairah reported that Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, asked: "Who do you consider to be a martyr?" They said: "O Allah's Prophet, he who is killed fighting for the cause of Allah." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "(If this is so) then very few in my community will be martyrs!" They asked: "Who else are they, O Allah's Messenger?" He said: "He who is killed fighting for Allah's cause is a martyr, he who dies in the cause of Allah is a martyr, he who dies in an epidemic is a martyr, he who dies from a stomach disease is a martyr, and the one who dies of drowning is (also) a martyr." This hadith is narrated by Muslim.

Sa'id ibn Zaid reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "He who is killed while guarding his property is a martyr, he who is killed while defending himself is a martyr, and he who is killed defending his religion is a martyr, and he who dies protecting his family is (also) a martyr." This hadith is narrated by Ahmad and Tirmidhi. The latter considers it a sound hadith.

A Disbeliever is not to be Washed

It is not necessary for a Muslim to wash a disbeliever's body. Some scholars, however, consider it permissible. According to the Maliki and Hanbali schools, a Muslim may not wash a disbeliever's body even if he is one of his near of kin. Similarly a Muslim is not permitted to shroud him or bury him unless it is feared that the body would decompose because of weather conditions, or that it would attract predatory beasts, etc. In such a case, he may be buried in a hole and covered with dust. This opinion is based on a tradition transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ali who said: "I said to Allah's Messenger 'Your uncle, the old misguided man, has passed away.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Go and bury your father and do not do anything else until you return to me'." 'Ali

said: "I did as he had told me and went back to him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered me to take a bath, and then he prayed for me."

Ibn al-Mundhir says there is nothing specific reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him, about the procedure of washing the dead body.

Washing a Dead Body

The entire body must be washed with water, at least once, regardless of whether the deceased is a male and needed a ritual bath, or a female who was menstruating at the time (of her death). It is recommended that the body be placed on an elevated surface i. e., a table or a board. It then should be stripped of clothes, but his *'awra* (private parts) should be covered.[62] At the washing, only people whose presence is needed may stay.

The washer, male or female, must be a trustworthy and pious person who will not broadcast what he or she might see except what is good.

Ibn Majah reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Trustworthy persons should wash your dead." A washer must utter his or her intention to wash the body of a specific person. Then he should begin by lightly pressing the stomach of the deceased so as to expel, if possible, any remnants from it, and then wash the body of all impurities. The washer should use a wash cloth or wrap his or her hand with it, because touching the private parts of the dead is *haram* (forbidden). Then he or she should wash the deceased as in *wudu* (ablution) for the *salah* (obligatory prayers). The Prophet, peace be upon him, is reported to have said: "Begin washing the dead by washing organs on the right, and those parts that are washed in ablution." This is in order to crystalize the mark of the believer's parts of the body always washed during *wudu* that will shine forth brightly on the Day of Judgement. Then beginning from its right side, the body should be washed with soap and water, three times. If soap is not available, then washing with ordinary water will suffice. If the washer feels that three washes are not enough to cleanse the body properly, then he may wash it five or seven times. According to a *sahih* hadith, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Wash the dead body an odd number of times, that is, three, five, or seven, or more if you feel it is necessary."[63]

Ibn al-Mundhir said: "The Prophet instructed the female washers to wash the dead body more than seven times in case they felt it was necessary to do so, but it must be an odd number of times. If the deceased is a female, then her hair should be loosened, washed, redone, and placed behind her back. According to a hadith narrated by Umm 'Atiyyah the hair of the Prophet's daughter was done in three plaits. I asked: 'Did they loosen her hair and then redo them in three braids?' She said: 'Yes'." Muslim reports this in these

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[62] Ash-Shafi'i says that it is better to wash the body of the deceased wearing a shirt, if it is thin enough to let water reach the body. The Prophet, peace be upon him, was washed this way, but it was done only in his case. The common practice has been to cover the *'awra* and wash the body.

[63]. Ibn Abd al-Barr observes: "I know about no one who recommended more than seven washes." Ahmad and Ibn al-Mundhir disliked to exceed beyond seven.

words: "We braided her hair in three braids, on both sides and in front (of her)." In his *Sahih*, Ibn Hibban says: "They did so in compliance with the order of the Prophet: 'Do her hair in three plaits'."

After having washed the body, it should be dried with a clean cloth lest the shroud should get wet. Then some perfume should be applied to it. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When you apply perfume (to the dead), apply it an odd number of times after washing it." This is reported by Al-Baihaqi, Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban, of whom the last two consider it a sound hadith.

Abu Wa'il said: "Ali had some musk, and he requested that it be applied to his body upon his death. This was of what was left from the perfume used on the body of the Prophet upon his death."

The majority of scholars are of the opinion that clipping a deceased's finger nails, trimming his mustache, shaving the hair under his arms or from his private parts is *makruh* (disliked). Ibn Hazm, however, considers it permissible.

The scholars are agreed that the body of the deceased be rewashed if the stomach excrete something (i. e., urine or stool) after it had been washed and prior to being shrouded. They differ, however, whether in such a case the entire body should be rewashed. Some hold that the body must be washed again in such a case. Others are of the opinion that there is no need to wash the whole body again, while still others hold that at least *wudu* (ablution) must be repeated in such a case. Some others hold that in such a case the entire washing must be repeated.

The opinions of most scholars concerning washing of the dead are based on the hadith transmitted by the group on the authority of Umm 'Atiyyah who said: "The Prophet came to our house when his daughter died, and said: 'Wash her three times, five times, or more than that if you consider it necessary, with water and *sidr* (lotus tree leaves), and after the last wash apply some camphor to the body, and inform me after you have done so.' So when we finished washing we informed him. He gave us a cloth that he wore around his waist, and told us to wrap her in it as a first sheet of shroud."

The reason for using camphor, as mentioned by some scholars, is its pleasant smell, since burial is a time when angels are present. Besides, it is cool and has a soothing effect, especially when the body stiffens, and helps keep various insects away from the body, thus preventing its early decomposition. In case camphor is not available, any other substance that has these or some of these properties may be used instead.

Cleaning the Body by *Tayammum* When Water is Unavailable

If there is no water to wash the dead body, then it may be cleaned with *tayammum* (ablution with dust), for Allah says in the Qur'an: "If you do not find water, then perform *tayammum* (ablution with dust)." And the Prophet said: "The entire earth has been made pure and a mosque for me."

Similarly if it is feared that the body might deteriorate if it is washed, then it may be given a *tayammum*.

The same applies to a woman who passes away when there is no other woman around to wash her, or if a man dies and there are only women but no man to wash him. Abu Daw'ud in his collection of *Marasil*, and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Makhul, report that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If a woman dies while she is with men and there is no other woman with them, or if a man dies while with woman, and there is no other man there, then the body of the dead person may be given a *tayammum* instead of washing it and then it should be buried. They both will be regarded as ones who died when there was no water available to wash (and purify)."

The body of a woman shall be given *tayammum* by one of her *mahrim* consanguine relatives with his hand. If there is no consanguine relative present, then any other man can give her a *tayammum* by wrapping a piece of cloth around his hand. This is the opinion of Abu Hanifah and Ahmad. Malik and Ash-Shafi'i are of the view that "if a male relative of the deceased is available, then he should wash the body of the dead woman, for in matters of *'awrah*[64] (nakedness of the private parts) and being alone with a woman, she is considered and treated in such a case as a male person for him.

In Al-Murawwa it is noted that Malik said: "I heard the scholars saying: 'If a woman dies and there is no other woman there to wash her, nor any male consanguine relative nor her husband who could undertake this responsibility, then she should be given a *tayammum*, wiping her face and hands with dry soil'." Malik said: "The same should be done in the case of a man who dies and there are only women around him."[65]

One Spouse Washing the Other

The jurists are agreed on the permissibility of a wife washing the body of her dead husband. 'Aishah said: "Had I known then what I know now, I would not have allowed anyone, except his wives, to wash the body of the Prophet." This has been transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Daw'ud, and by al-Hakim, who considers it a sound hadith.

There is a difference of opinion, however, on the permissibility of the husband washing the body of his dead wife. The majority of scholars, nonetheless, consider it permissible, as is shown by a report, narrated by ad-

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[64] *'Awrah* (Arabic), those parts of a person's body which must be covered. A man must cover the front and back of his pubic region. There is disagreement about the navel, thighs, and knees. There is, however, no disagreement over what constitutes a woman's *'awrah*. Her entire body is *'awrah* and must be covered, except her hands and face.

[65] Ibn Hazm holds that if a man dies while among women and there is no man around, or if a woman dies while among men with no other woman around, then the women may wash the body of the man and the men the body of the woman while covered in thick cloth. The water should be poured over the whole body without any physical contact. He is of the view that *tayammum* may not be given instead of a wash except when no water is available.

Daraqutni and Al-Baihaqi, that Ali washed the body of Fatimah on her death. This is also supported by a hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said to 'Aishah: "If you die before me, I will myself wash you and enshroud you." Ibn Majah records this hadith.

The Hanafi school holds that it is not permissible for a husband to wash his wife's dead body, and if there is no other woman available then he should give her *tayammum*. However, the above ahadith prove the contrary of this view.

A Woman Washing a Boy

Ibn al-Mundhir said: "All great scholars are agreed that a woman may wash the body of a young boy."

Chapter Three

AL-KAFAN (THE SHROUD)

Legal Status

Shrouding the body of the deceased, even it be with just one piece of cloth, is a collective obligation (*fard kifayah*) of the Muslims. Bukhari narrated from Khabbab that he said: "We migrated with Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, seeking Allah's pleasure, and we hope He will reward us for that. In the meanwhile some of us died and received no reward in this life. One of them was Musa'ab ibn 'Umayr, who was killed in the Battle of Uhud. We did not find anything to shroud him in except a piece of cloth. When we covered his head, his feet would show, and if we covered his feet, his head would show. Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, ordered us to use the cloth to cover his head with it and cover his feet with some grass."[66]

Preferable Practices in Shrouding

In shrouding, the following practices are recommended and should be observed while preparing a body for burial.

1) The shroud should be nice, clean, and large enough to cover the entire body. This is based on a narration of Ibn Majah and Tirmidhi, who regard it a sound hadith from Abu Qatadah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If one of you is a guardian to his deceased brother, he should give him the best shroud he can."

2) A shroud should be white, as it is recorded by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, and Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Wear white clothes, for these are your best clothes, and enshroud your dead in them." Tirmidhi considers it a sound hadith.

3) The shroud should be scented and perfumed. The hadith is cited by Ahmad and by Al-Hakim, who regards it as sound, in accordance with Jabir's narration that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If you perfume a dead body, do it three times." Abu Sa'id, Ibn 'Umar, and Ibn 'Abbas directed their heirs in their wills to perfume their shrouds with aloes-wood.

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[66] *Idhkhar*, a sweet smelling grass that is also used to cover roofs.

4) The shroud should be three wraps for a man and five wraps for a woman, in light of what is narrated by the group from 'Aishah who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was wrapped in three pieces of new white sheets of cloth from Yemen, without a shirt or a turban."

Tirmidhi said: "The majority of the scholars among the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) and others hold this view." Sufyan Al-Thawri said: "A (deceased) male should be shrouded in three pieces of cloth, or a shirt and two loose pieces of cloth, or (if necessary) three wraps of cloth.

One wrap may suffice if nothing else is available. Two wraps will also suffice, but three wraps are preferable for those who can afford it. This is the opinion of Ash-Shafi'i, Ahmad, and Ishaq. They hold that a deceased female should be enshrouded in five sheets.

It is reported from Umm 'Atiyyah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, gave her a loincloth, a shirt, a scarf, and two pieces of cloth (to be used as a shroud for him). Ibn Al-Mundhir said: "Most of the scholars, our teachers, are of the opinion that a woman should be shrouded in five sheets of cloth.

Shrouding a Pilgrim

If a pilgrim dies, he is to be washed the same way any non-pilgrim is washed. He should be shrouded in his *ihram* (two pieces of seamless cloth which the pilgrims don during *umrah* or *hajj*. His head should not be covered, nor should any perfume be applied to his body, because the restrictions of *ihram* still apply to him. This is based on what the group reported from Ibn 'Abbas, who said: "During the last *hajj*, a man, mounted on a horse, was close to Allah's Prophet, peace be upon him, and was trying to learn more from him, when he suddenly fell off his mount. The horse kicked him and killed him. When the Prophet, peace be upon him, was told about him, he said: 'Wash him with water and lotus (leaves), then wrap him in his two sheets, and do not perfume his body nor cover his head, for Allah, the Exalted, will raise him on the Day of Resurrection with *talbiyah*[67] on his lips'."

The Hanafi and Maliki schools hold that when a pilgrim dies, then his state of *ihram* is terminated, so that thereafter he may be shrouded like any non-pilgrim. His shroud may be sewn, his head may be covered, and he may be perfumed. In their opinion the case of the man who died while with the Prophet, peace be upon him, during the Hajj season is of a special case and does not set a precedent for other cases. Nevertheless the reason given (for not covering his head or perfuming his body . .) applies generally. The statement that he will be raised on the Day of Judgement with *talbiyah* on his tongue clearly applies to all who die in the state of *ihram*, because it is a well established juristic principle that a ruling true for one case is also true and applicable to other similar cases, unless there is something indicating that the case is specific in

[67] The prayer uttered during hajj by the pilgrims.

nature and limited in scope.

Extravagance in Shrouding is Disliked

A shroud should be nice, but not so extravagantly expensive that it would unduly burden a person.

Ash-Shafi'i remarked, "Ali said: 'Do not be extravagant in shrouding me. I have heard Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, say: "Do not be extravagant in preparing your shroud for it will soon be taken away."' This is narrated by Abu Daw'ud, in whose chain of narrators is a man called Abu Malik, who is of somewhat dubious character.

It is narrated that Hudhaifah said, "Do not be extravagant in preparing the shroud. Buy for my shroud two clean white sheets of cloth."

Abu Bakr said: "Wash this garment of mine, and add another two sheets of cloth, and shroud me in them." At this 'Aishah said, "This garment that you are wearing is old and worn out." He said, "The living are more deserving of the new garments than the dead. This shroud is only to absorb the secretions of the body."

Using Silk Cloth in the Shroud

It is not permissible for a man to be buried in a silk shroud, but it is permissible for a woman. This is based on the following saying of Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, concerning silk and gold: "Both of these things, i. e. gold and silk, are forbidden for the males of my *ummah*, but they are permissible for the females."

Many scholars, however, disapprove of a woman using a silk shroud, because this is extravagant and a waste of money and therefore forbidden. These scholars differentiate between the permissibility for a woman to wear ornaments during her lifetime and the practice of beautifying the shroud after her death.

Ahmad said: "I do not like a woman to be shrouded in silk." Likewise Al-Hasan, Ibn al-Mubarak, and Ishaq expressed their disapproval. Ibn Al-Mundhir said, "I know of no other scholars with a different view on this subject."

The Shroud Should Be Purchased with the Deceased's Money

A person who dies and leaves some money behind should have his shroud purchased with his money. If the deceased did not leave any money, then, whoever is responsible for taking care of his living expenses should provide his shroud. In case the deceased leaves no money and there is no one to take care of him, then his shroud should be purchased by the Public Treasury of the Muslims. Otherwise individual Muslims should take care of it. The same applies in case of both the males and the females.

Ibn Hazm said: "The cost of a woman's shroud and the digging of her grave should be met out of her own money. Her husband is not obliged to pay for it, for the properties of Muslims are forbidden to be used except by the authority of the Qur'an or sunnah.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Verily, your blood and property are sacred and are forbidden to each other." Allah, the Exalted, imposed on a husband the responsibility of providing his wife with food, clothing, and housing. The shroud is not synonymous with clothing, according to the language in which Allah chose to address us, nor is the grave equivalent to housing.

Chapter Four

FUNERAL PRAYERS

Its Legal Status

There is a consensus among all the great Muslim jurists that a funeral prayer for a deceased person is a collective obligation or *fard kifayah*. The Prophet, peace be upon him, commanded the Muslims to offer it, and they have been doing so ever since they received this commandment.

Abu Hurairah reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, was informed of the death of a person, he used to ask: Does he owe anything to anyone?' If the answer was in the affirmative, he would then ask: 'Has he (the deceased) left anything to settle his debt?' If he had left something to settle his debt, he would offer the funeral prayer for him. Otherwise, he would say to the Muslims: 'Offer a (funeral) prayer for your brother'" (Bukhari and Muslim).

Reward for Offering Funeral Prayer

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Whoever follows a funeral procession and offers the prayer for the deceased, will get one *kerat*[68] of reward. And whoever follows it and remains with it until the body is buried, will get two *kerats* of reward, the least of which is equal in weight to 'Mount Uhud' or he said 'one of them is like Uhud.' The narrator is not certain as to the exact words used by the Prophet, peace be upon him. This is reported by the group.

Khabbab reported that he asked "O 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar! Did you hear what Abu Hurairah says? He says that he heard Allah's Messenger, saying. 'Whoever leaves his house to attend a funeral prayer, offers funeral prayer, and then follows the funeral procession until the body is buried will receive two

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[68] A measure, 1/16th of a *dirham* (or a drachm).

kerats of reward, each of which is like the mountain of Uhud. And whoever offers the funeral prayer and then leaves for home[69] will get a reward like the mountain of Uhud" (Muslim). Ibn 'Umar sent Khabbab to 'Aishah asking her about the statement of Abu Hurairah. She said, "Abu Hurairah has told the truth." When Ibn 'Umar was informed about this he said, "We have indeed lost many a *kerat.*"

Requisite Conditions for Funeral Prayer

The prerequisites for a funeral prayer are the same as for the obligatory prayers. Anyone intending to offer funeral prayer must be in a state of purity, be free from all minor and major impurities, must cover his or her "*'awrah,*" and stand facing the direction of the Ka'bah.

Malik reported from Nafi' that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar used to say: "One should not offer a funeral prayer unless he is in a state of purity."

The funeral prayer differs from the prescribed prayers in that there is no fixed time for offering it. It may be offered at any time, including the times when regular prayers may not be offered. This is the opinion of the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools. Ahmad, Ibn Al-Mubarak, and Ishaq dislike offering a funeral prayer at sunrise, at noon when the sun is at its zenith, and at dusk when the sun is about to set, except in cases when it is feared that if delayed, the body might decompose.

Main Requirements of the Funeral Prayer

Certain requirements must be met for a valid funeral prayer, and failure to meet any of these may invalidate the prayer. These requirements are given below:

1) Intention

The real intention is what is in the heart, and its verbal utterance is not legally required.

Allah says in the Qur'an: "And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true in (faith)."[70]

And the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Verily, all deeds (of a person) will be judged in the light of the intentions behind them, and every person will attain what he intends."

2) Standing Prayer

The majority of scholars regard it as an essential condition for a valid funeral prayer to stand while praying if one is physically able to do so. A funeral prayer offered while sitting or riding, without any valid excuse, is not valid.

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[69] This proves that a person does not need permission of the family of the deceased to leave after attending the funeral.

[70] Qur'an 98:5

It is reported in *Al-Mughni* "It is not permissible for one to offer a funeral prayer while riding, as in this case an essential condition — standing while praying — would be missing." This is the opinion of Abu Hanifah, Ash-Shafi'i, and Abu Thaur. There is no difference on this point. It is preferable to put one's hands together, placing the right on the left, as is done in the prescribed regular prayer. Some disagree, but in our view it is better and preferable.

3) Loud Recitation of Four *Takbirs*

This is based on a report transmitted by both Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Jabir who said: "Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, offered funeral prayers for Najashi (Negus) and said four *takbirs.* [71]

Tirmidhi said: Most of the learned Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) and others followed and acted in accordance with the above example of the Prophet. They hold that four *takbirs* should be said in a funeral prayer. Among these scholars are Sufyan, Malik, Ibn Al-Mubarak, Ash-Shafi'i, Ahmad, and Ishaq.

Raising of One's Hands During the *Takbirs*

It is *sunnah* to raise one's hands while uttering the first *takbir*. There is nothing related from the Prophet, peace be upon him, to show that he raised his hands in funeral prayer except for the first *takbir*. Ash-Shawkani mentions various opinions about *takbirs* and the arguments for them and says: "In short nothing except the first *takbir* is reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him. The acts and sayings of the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless them) by themselves do not constitute a conclusive argument. Therefore one should raise one's hands only on saying the first *takbir*. For the rest of the (three) *takbirs* no such instruction is available, except when one changes from one posture to another as in the regular prayer. There is no such change of posture required in the funeral prayer, so there is no need for raising hands in other than the first "*takbir*".

Reciting "*Al-Fatihah*" and Salutations to the Prophet [72]

Ash-Shafi'i has in his *Musnad* narrated from Abu Umamah ibn Sahl that one of the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) told him that when offering a (funeral) prayer it is *sunnah* for the imam to say aloud *Allahu Akbar* (first opening *takbir)*, then to recite *al-Fatihah* silently in his heart, and then send salutations to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and then pray for forgiveness of the deceased. Nothing else is to be recited in between *takbirs*. Finally, he should end his prayer with salutations in his heart. [73] The

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[71] That is, he said *Allahu akbar* four times.

[72] Abu Hanifah and Malik regard these as two essential requisites of funeral prayer.

[73] According to the majority of scholars, reciting *al-fatihah*, sending blessings upon the Prophet, supplicating for the deceased, and salutations are *sunnah*. In the case of the *imam*, however, it is *sunnah* to utter the *takbir* and salutations aloud in order to communicate with those praying with him.

author of *Al-Fath* says: "The chain of narrators of this hadith is sound."

Bukhari reported from Talha ibn Abdullah that he said: "I offered a funeral prayer that was led by Ibn Abbas. He recited *Al-Fatihah* and said: 'This is a sunnah of the Prophet, peace be upon him.'" Tirmidhi also reported this and remarked that this has been the practice of some of the learned among the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them). Others prefer to recite *Al-Fatihah* after the first *takbir*. This is the opinion of Ash-Shafi'i , Ahmad, and Ishaq. Some others hold that *Al-Fatihah* is not to be recited in a funeral prayer. The funeral prayer should consist of praise for Allah (*thana*), blessings (*salawat*) upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, and a prayer (*du'a*) for forgiveness of the deceased. This is the opinion of Al-Thawri and other scholars of Kufah. Those who hold the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in a funeral prayer obligatory argue that the Prophet, peace be upon him, called it a prayer (*salat*) when he said: "Offer prayer (*sallu*) for your deceased friend." And as no prayer can be complete without *al-Fatihah*, for the Prophet, peace be upon him, also told us "no prayer is valid unless *al-Fatihah* is recited in it."

Invoking Blessings upon Allah's Prophet

Prayer for peace and blessings upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, may be said in any form. If someone were to say: "O Allah, bless Muhammad," it should suffice. It is better, however, to use the prayers transmitted through tradition, like the following:

(Allahumma Salli 'ala-Muhammad wa'ala ali Muhammad kama sallayta 'ala Ibrahim wa 'ala ali Ibrahim wa barik 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala ali Muhammad kama barakta 'ala Ibrahim wa 'ala ali Ibrahim innaka hamidun Majid)."

«اللهم صلي على محمد وعلى ال محمد
كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم
وبارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما
باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك
حميد مجيد»

"O Allah! Grant peace to Muhammad and his family as you did to Ibrahim and his family. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and his family as you blessed Ibrahim and his family. Truly You are Most Glorious and Most Praiseworthy

This should be said after the second *takbir*, as is obvious, though there is nothing specifically reported in this regard as to its precise place in the funeral prayer.

Supplication for the Deceased

This is a basic element of funeral prayer according to the consensus of juristic opinion. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When you offer a funeral prayer for a deceased person, pray sincerely for him to Allah." This is reported by Abu Daw'ud, Al-Baihaqi and Ibn Hibban, who said it is a sound

hadith.

For this purpose any supplication, even a brief one, may be used. It is recommended, however, to use one of the following supplications reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him:

1) Abu Hurairah said: The Prophet, peace be upon him, prayed in one of the funeral prayers:

Allahumma anta Rubbuha wa ant khalaqtaha wa anta razaqtaha wa ant hadaytaha lil Islam wa anta qabadata ruha-ha wa anta alamu bisirriha wa 'alaniyatiha. Ji'na shuf'a la-ha faghfir laha zanbaha

«اللهم أنت ربها وأنت خلقتها وأنت رزقتها وأنت هديتها للإسلام وأنت قبضت روحها وأنت أعلم بسرها وعلانيتها جئنا شفعاء لها فاغفر لها ذنبها»

"Oh Allah! You are her Sustainer, You are her Creator, You provided her with sustenance, guided her to Islam, caused her to die, and You best know her secret and public life. We plead to You on her behalf to forgive her sins."

2) Wa'ilah ibn al-Asqa reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, led us in a funeral prayer for a man from among the Muslims. I heard him saying:

Allahumma inna fulana ibna fulan fi dhimatika wa habla jawaraka, fa-qihu min fitnatal qabri wa adhabin nar wa anta ahlal wafa' wal haq, allahumma faghfir lahu war-rahmhu fa innaka antal ghafurur Raheem

«اللهم إن فلاناً بن فلان في ذمتك وحبل جوارك فقه من فتنة القبر وعذاب النار وأنت أهل الوفاء والحق اللهم اغفر له وارحمه فإنك أنت الغفور الرحيم»

'O Allah! So and so, son of so and so, is under Your protection and mercy, so protect him from the trial of the grave and the torture of Hell Fire. You are the guardian of the truthful and the faithful. O Allah! Forgive him and be merciful to him, as You are the Most Merciful, Most Forgiving'." Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Daw'ud.

3) 'Awf ibn Malik reported: "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, while offering a funeral prayer, say:

Allahumma-ghfir lahu war-rhamhu wa'fu anhu wa 'afahu wa akrim nuzulahu wa wassi' mudkhalahu waghsilhu bi-ma' ind wa thalj wa barad wa naqi minal khataya kama yunaqi athaubudanas minad danas wa abdilhu daran khairan min darihi wa ahlan khairan min ahlihi wa zaujan khairan min zaujihi wa qih fitnatal qabr wa adhaban nar

«اللهم اغفر له وارحمه واعف عنه وعافه وأكرم نزله ووسع مدخله واغسله بماء وثلج وبرد ونقه من الخطايا كما ينقى الثوب الدنس من الدنس وأبدله داراً خيراً من داره وأهلاً خيراً من أهله وزوجاً خيراً من زوجه وقه فتنة القبر وعذاب النار»

'O Allah! Forgive him, have mercy on him, pardon him, heal him, be generous

to him, cause his entrance to be wide and comfortable, wash him with the most pure and clean water, and purify him from sins as a white garment is washed clean of dirt. Give him in exchange a home better than his home (on earth) and a family better than his family, and a wife better than his wife, and protect him from the trial of the grave and the torture of Hell Fire'." This is narrated by Muslim.

4) It is reported from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, offered a funeral prayer and said:

Allahummaghfir lihayatina wa mayatina wa saghirina wa kabirina wa dhakirina wa unthana. Allahumma man ahyatahu minna fa-ahyahu 'alal Islam wa man tawafthu minna fa-tawafthu 'ala iman. Allahumma la tahrimna ajrahu wa la tudalana ba'dahu

«اللهم اغفر لحينا وميتنا وصغيرنا وكبيرنا وذكرنا وأنثانا اللهم من أحييته منا فأحيه على الإسلام ومن توفيته منا فتوفه على الإيمان اللهم لا تحرمنا أجره ولا تضيعنا بعده»

"O Allah! Forgive our living, our dead, our young, our old, our males and our females, those of us who are present, and those who are absent. O Allah! Whomsoever among us You keep to live, make him to live in Islam, and whomsoever You cause to die, let him die in faith. O Allah! Do not deprive us of our reward for (supplicating for) him, and cause us not to go astray after him." This is narrated by Ahmad and the other Sunan books. [74]

If the deceased is a child, then it is desirable to pray:

Allahumma 'ij'alhu lana salafan wa dhukhran

«اللهم اجعله لنا سلفاً وذخراً»

"O Allah! Make him our forerunner and make him (a means of) reward for us and a treasure." Bukhari and Al-Baihaqi report it from Al-Hasan. Nawawi said: "If the deceased is a child, a boy or a girl, one should say what is reported in the hadith, namely, "O Allah! Forgive our living, our dead, . . . ," and add the words

Allahumma 'ij'alhu faratan li-abwaihi wa salafan wa dhukhran wa izatan wa i'tibaran wa shafi'an wa thaqil bihi mawazinahumma wa afrighas sabra 'ala qulubihima wa la taftinhumma ba'dahu wa la tuharim-humma ajrahu

«اللهم اجعله فرطاً لأبويه وسلفاً وذخراً وعزة واعتباراً وشفيعاً وثاقل به موازينهما وأفرغ صبراً على قلبيهما ولا تفتنهما بعده ولا تحرمهما أجره»

"O Allah, make him (or her) for his\her parents a forerunner, a treasure and an admonition, an honor, an intercessor, and cause him (or her) to make their scales of good deeds heavier (on the Day of Judgement). O Allah! Grant them patience, and O Allah! Do not put them to trial after him (or her) nor deprive them of his (or her) reward."

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[74] Authentic canonical collections of hadith.

Timing of Supplications

Ash-Shawkani said: There are no fixed times for these prayers. One may use any of these after all the *takbirs*, or after the first or second or third *takbir*, or divide it between each two *takbirs*, or say any of these prayers in between each two *takbirs* in the light of the practice of the Prophet, peace be upon him. It is also said that supplications should be done in the words given in the above reported ahadith for both male or female dead persons.

Supplications after the fourth *takbir*

It is preferred to supplicate for the deceased after the fourth *takbir*, even though the supplicant may have done so after the third *takbir*. This is based on a narration by Ahmad on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn Abi Awfa who said that when his daughter died, at his funeral prayer for her he made four *takbirs*. After the fourth *takbir*, he stood supplicating for as much as he did in between the other *takbirs*. Then he said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to do the same in a funeral prayer."

Ash-Shafi'i said: "After the fourth *takbir* one may say,

Allahumma la tuharimna ajrahu wa la taftinna ba'dahu

«اللهم لا تحرمنا أجره ولا تفتنا بعده»

'O Allah! Do not deprive us of reward for (supplicating for) him/her, nor put us to trial after him (or her)'."

Ibn Abu Hurairah said: "After the fourth *takbir* the elders used to say:

Allahumma Rabbana atina fi ad-Dunya hasanatan wa fi al-Akhirati hasanatan wa qina 'adhab an-Nar

«اللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار»

'O Allah! Grant us good in this life and good in the life to come, and save us from the torment of Hell Fire."

Salutations

All jurists with the exception of Abu Hanifah are in agreement that the two salutations (saying *assalamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullah*), one to the right and the other to the left, are obligatory. Abu Hanifah, however is of the view that they are required, but not obligatory as a condition. Those who hold it to be obligatory argue that the funeral prayer is a prayer (*salah*), and as such it cannot be terminated except by salutations (to the right and left).

Ibn Mas'ud said: "Salutations at the end of a funeral prayer are similar to those said at the end of any formal prayer. The minimum that would suffice in this respect is to say: "*As-Salamu 'Alaikum*" or "*salamun 'alaikum*" (the peace be with you or peace be with you)."

Ahmad is of the opinion that one salutation — the salutation to the right — is sunnah, and there is no harm if one says it while looking straight ahead. This is based on the practice of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his Companions who ended their funeral prayer with one salutation. No difference of opinion among them is on record on this issue.

Ash-Shafi'i holds that two salutations, turning one's face first to the right and then to the left, are commendable. Ibn Hazm said: "The second salutation is remembrance of Allah, and an act of virtue."

Summary

1) Make sure that you meet all the requirements for a formal prayer (salah);
2) Stand up with the intention of supplicating for the deceased;
3) Raise both hands with a takbir (takbirat al ihram);
4) Fold your right hand over your left hand;
5) Commence the funeral prayer with the (silent) recitation of Al-Fatihah.
6) After Al-Fatihah say another takbir,
7) Offer salutations to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and end with a takbir.
8) Now supplicate for the deceased, and end with a takbir.
9) Make a general supplication.
10) End the prayer with salutations (to the right and to the left side).

Imam's Position in Funeral Prayer for a Male or a Female

It is sunnah for the imam to stand opposite the head of a male body, and opposite the middle of a female body. This is based on a hadith reported from Anas that he offered a funeral prayer for a male standing opposite his head. As soon as the body of the man was removed, a female body was brought in for funeral prayer. He led the prayer standing opposite the middle of her body. Thereupon he was asked, "Did the Prophet, peace be upon him, stand where you stood in the cases of a man and a woman?" He answered: "Yes." This is narrated by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, Ibn Majah and Tirmidhi, who regards it as a sound hadith. Al-Tahawi said: This is the most preferred position, because it is supported by other reports from Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him.

Funeral Prayer for a Number of Dead Persons

If there are a number of bodies, including both male and female, they should be placed in separate rows, between the imam and the direction of the Ka'abah, with the best among them nearer to the imam, and a single funeral prayer may be offered for all of them.

If the deceased include both male and female, a separate prayer for each may be offered. But it is also permissible to offer one prayer for all of them at

once. In such a case the male should be placed immediately before the Imam and then the female in the direction of the Qiblah.

It is reported by Nafi' from Ibn 'Umar that he offered a funeral prayer for nine of the deceased, males and females. He placed the males closest to the imam and then the females in the direction of the Qiblah. He placed all of them in one row. The funeral of Umm Kulthum, daughter of 'Ali and the wife of 'Umar, and her son called Zaid, was led by Sa'id ibn al-'As, and among the people attending this funeral were Ibn Abbas, Abu Hurairah, Abu Sa'id and Abu Qatadah. The little boy was placed before the imam. A man said: "I do not like this arrangement, and looked towards Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Hurairah, Abu Sa'id and Abu Qatadah, and said to them: "What is this?" They replied: "This is the sunnah of the Prophet, peace be upon him,. This was narrated by Nasa'i and Al-Baihaqi, and Al-Hafiz says its chain of authorities is sound.

Another hadith says that if a funeral prayer is offered for a child together with a woman, the boy should be placed nearer the imam and the woman next to it in the direction of the Qiblah.

And if there are men, women and children, then the children should be placed next to the men.

Three Rows for a Funeral Prayer are Commended

It is recommended that the people should make three rows [75] while offering a funeral prayer, and that these rows should be straight. This is based on a report from Malik ibn Habairah who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Every believer who dies is forgiven by Allah if a group of Muslims comprising three rows prays for him'." That is why, if there were not many people attending a funeral prayer, Malik ibn Habayrah would make them stand in three rows. This is narrated by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi, and Al-Hakim, who considers it a sound hadith.

Ahmad said: "If the number of people present at the funeral prayer is very small I would still prefer that they make three rows." He was asked: "What if there are only four people present?" He replied: "They may make two rows, with two persons in each line." He did not like three rows with each of them consisting of only one person.

A Larger Number is Much Preferred

A larger gathering of people for the funeral prayer is preferable, as is reported by 'Aishah who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'If a Muslim dies and his funeral prayer is attended by a group of a hundred Muslims, and they all sincerely pray for his forgiveness, he is forgiven'." This is narrated by Ahmad, Muslim, and Tirmidhi.

Ibn 'Abbas reported: "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: 'If

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[75] The minimum number of people for a row is two persons.

a Muslim dies and a group of forty people, who do not associate any one with Allah, pray for him, their prayer is accepted and he is forgiven'." This has been narrated by Ahmad, Muslim, and Abu Daw'ud.

Arriving Late for Funeral Prayer

A person who misses a part of a funeral prayer should make up the missed *takbirs* — making them consecutively. This is preferable, but if he cannot do it there is no harm. Ibn 'Umar, Al-Hasan, Ayyub Al-Sukhtiani, and Al-Awza'i are of the opinion that such a person is not required to repeat the missed *takbirs*, and he should finish his prayer with the salutations led by the imam.

Ahmad said: "If he cannot make the missed *takbirs*, there is no harm." The author of *Al-Mughni* prefers this opinion and remarks: "It is supported by a saying of Ibn 'Umar and there is nothing on record from the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) to contradict it. It is reported by 'Aishah that she said to the Prophet, peace be upon him, "O Allah's Messenger, sometimes when I offer a funeral prayer, I cannot hear some of the *takbirs* by the imam?" He replied: "Say the *takbir* that you hear and do not worry about the ones that you miss. You do not have to repeat these later on." This statement is quite explicit. These are consecutive — uninterrupted — *takbirs* and, if missed, they need not be repeated like the ones in the 'Eid prayer.

Persons for Whom Funeral Prayer is to be Offered

There is a consensus among the jurists that funeral prayer is offered for all Muslims, male or female, and young or old. Ibn Al-Mundhir said: "The scholars are in agreement that if it is established that an infant is born alive, that is, by his crying, sneezing, or moving etc. , then, if it dies, a funeral prayer should be offered for it."

Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "One may ride one's mount behind the funeral, and walk on foot a little ahead of it or to its right or left. A funeral prayer should be offered for an aborted baby, seeking for his parents the mercy and forgiveness of Allah." This is reported by Ahmad and Abu Daw'ud. Another narration reads: "A person on foot may walk behind a funeral, or ahead of it, or on its left side or right side or still nearer to it." According to another report, "A rider should ride behind the funeral, whereas one on foot may walk anywhere. And a funeral prayer should be offered for a child." This is reported by Ahmad, Nasa'i, and Tirmidhi, who consider it a sound hadith.

Funeral Prayer for an Aborted Child

A miscarried fetus, less than four months old, may not be washed, nor may a funeral prayer be offered for it. It should be wrapped in a piece of cloth and buried. The majority of jurists are in agreement on this point.

On the other hand, if a miscarried fetus is four months old or older, and the existence of life in it is established, then there is a consensus that it should be washed and a funeral prayer offered for it. But if its life is not established by its movements or other evidence, then according to Malik, Al-Awza'i, Al-Hasan, and the Hanafi school, funeral prayer may not be offered for it. They base their opinion on a hadith transmitted by Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Jabir that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If in a miscarried fetus life is established by its movements, a funeral prayer should be offered for it, and it is entitled to its share of inheritance." According to this hadith offering a funeral prayer for a miscarried fetus is conditioned upon proof of its life evident in signs of life, such as its movement, etc.

Ahmad, Sa'id, Ibn Sirin, and Ishaq are of the opinion that in the light of the above hadith, a miscarried fetus may be washed and a funeral prayer may be offered for it. The words used in this hadith are "a funeral prayer should be offered for a miscarried fetus" because it has a soul and is alive. The Prophet, peace be upon him, informed us that a fetus receives a soul when it is four months old. Others refute this argument with the assertion that there is confusion in the chain of narrators of this hadith, and besides, a stronger hadith contradicts it. But this alone does not constitute a valid argument.

Funeral Prayer for a Martyr

A martyr is one who is killed in a battlefield fighting the enemies of Islam. All the ahadith on this subject are quite explicit that no funeral prayer may be offered for a martyr.

Bukhari has narrated from Jabir that the Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered that the martyrs of the battle of Uhud be buried while they were still bleeding. He neither washed them nor offered a funeral prayer for them.

Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi reported that Anas said: "The martyrs of Uhud were not washed. They were buried with their wounds unwashed, and no funeral prayer was offered for them."

There are, however, some ahadith that are equally explicit and state that a funeral prayer should be offered for martyrs.

Bukhari reported from 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir that one day the Prophet, peace be upon him, went out and offered a funeral prayer for the martyrs of Uhud, eight years after their death, as if he were bidding farewell to both the living and the dead.

Abu Malik Al-Ghafari reported: "The bodies of the martyrs of Uhud were brought in batches of nine and placed with the body of Hamzah, who served as the tenth. Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, offered a funeral prayer for them. After that the nine bodies were removed leaving Hamzah undisturbed. Then a batch of another nine martyrs was brought and placed beside Hamzah. The Prophet, peace be upon him, offered a funeral prayer for them as well. This way the Prophet offered funeral prayer for all of them. This hadith has been narrated by Al-Baihaqi, who says: "This is the most sound hadith on this

subject. It is, however, a *mursal* hadith.[76]

The difference in the narrations in these various ahadith has led jurists to differ on this matter. Some take all of them together, while others prefer some narrations over others. Ibn Hazm holds that either — offering or not offering (funeral prayer for the martyrs) — is permissible. It is alright whether or not a funeral prayer is offered for the martyrs. In one of his statements Ahmad has also expressed a similar view. Ibn al-Qayyim approves of this view and says: "The correct position in this regard is that one is given a choice whether or not to offer a funeral prayer (for a martyr), because there are reports in favor of both positions." This is the opinion also of Ahmad, and he is the proper person to describe the principles of his school. He says: "What is apparent from this is that no funeral prayer was offered for the martyrs of Uhud before burying them. There were seventy people who fell martyrs in that battle, and any funeral prayer for them could not have taken place in secret."

The hadith reported by Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not offer funeral prayer for these martyrs is sound and very explicit. Jabir's father was among those who were killed that day, and he knew what few besides him knew.

Abu Hanifah, Al-Thawri, Al-Hasan, and Ibn Al-Musayiyaib, however, are inclined to the reports stating that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did offer funeral prayer for the martyrs. They hold that a funeral prayer must be offered for martyrs. However, Malik, Ash-Shafi'i, Ishaq, and, according to one report, Ahmad, prefer the reports that say no funeral prayer is to be offered for martyrs. Ash-Shafi'i in his *Kitab al-Umm* writes: "All reports received concerning this subject are sound and show that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not offer funeral prayer for the martyrs of Uhud. Those who report that he offered funeral prayer for them and said seventy *takbirs* for Hamzah are not correct. Those who turn away from these sound ahadith should be ashamed of themselves. The hadith reported by 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir also states that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did so eight years after their death, as if he were bidding them farewell. This does not constitute abrogation of an established practice.[77]

A Person Surviving a Battle but later Dying of Wounds

If one is wounded in a battle, but survives, remains in a stable condition for a while, and then dies, he should be washed, and a funeral prayer should be offered for him, even though he may be a martyr. The Prophet, peace be upon him, washed Sa'd ibn Mu'adh, and offered a funeral prayer for him, after he died of his hand wounds. Sa'd was taken to the mosque, where he remained for a few days, and then he died as a martyr because of his infected wound.

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[76] *Mursal*: A hadith that rests on a chain of authorities going no further back than the second generation after the Prophet (peace be upon him).

[77] See *Al-Umm*, by Ash-Shafi'i

If on the other hand, a wounded fighter does not survive in a stable condition, or he just talked or drank water and thereafter died, he is not to be washed or offered a funeral prayer.

The author of *Al-Mughni* states: "It is recorded in *Futuh Al-Sham*, that a man said: "I took some water to give a drink to my cousin if he were still alive after some injuries in the battle. On the way, I passed by Al-Harith ibn Hisham, who was also wounded in the same battle. I wanted to give him a drink, but he noticed that another wounded man was looking toward him for a drink. At this he pointed that I should first give this man a drink. I went toward him to give him a drink, but he also found another man looking to him. So he gestured that I should first give him the drink. Thus they all died. None of them was washed or offered a funeral prayer although they all died after the battle.

Funeral Prayer for a Person Sentenced to Death for a Crime

Anyone sentenced to death by an Islamic court is to be washed and a funeral prayer should be offered for him. This is based on a report by Bukhari that Jabir said: "A man from the tribe of Aslam came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and confessed to fornication. The Prophet, peace be upon him, tried to avoid him four times, while the man repeated his testimony against himself. Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked the man: 'Are you mad?' The man said, 'No.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked him, 'Are you married?' He said, 'Yes.' Thereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered that the man be stoned to death. He was stoned to death at the place where (*'Eid* prayer) used to be offered. When the stones struck the man, he tried to run away, but was overtaken and killed. After his death, the Prophet, peace be upon him, spoke well of him, and offered funeral prayer for him. Ahmad said: "We know of no cases where the Prophet, peace be upon him, refused to offer funeral prayer for any one except in cases of one convicted of embezzlement (of *zakat* funds) and a person who committed suicide."

Funeral Prayer for those Guilty of Embezzlement, Suicide, or Some Other Sins

The majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that a funeral prayer may be offered for a person who is convicted of embezzlement of public funds, or commits suicide or some similarly sinful act.

An-Nawawi said: "Al-Qadi said: 'All Muslim scholars hold that a funeral prayer be offered for all Muslims - those sentenced to death under Islamic law, or stoned to death, or those who committed suicide, or were born out of wedlock. The reports about the Prophet, peace be upon him, not praying for embezzlers and those guilty of suicide may be explained perhaps by considering such refusal to be a form of reprimand to these people. This is similar to his practice of refusing to pray for those who died in debt, though he asked other Muslims to offer the funeral prayer for them'."

Ibn Hazm said: "Funeral prayer should be offered for all Muslims, whether good or bad, including those sentenced to death and those that die fighting or in revolt. The imam, or any one other than him, may lead the funeral prayers. Likewise funeral prayers should be said for an innovator, provided his innovation does not become blasphemy, and prayer may also be said for one who commits suicide or kills some one else. A funeral prayer may be offered in all such cases even though the deceased might have been the most evil person on the face of the earth, provided he dies as a Muslim. This is based on a hadith from the Prophet, peace be upon him, that has a general bearing. "Offer a funeral prayer for your friend (a fellow Muslim)," he is reported to have said on the death of a Muslim. All Muslims are friends to one another. The Qur'an says: "Verily! The believers are but a single brotherhood"[78] and "The believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another." [79]

To prevent others from offering funeral prayers over a Muslim is a most serious thing, for surely a sinful Muslim is more in need of prayers from his Muslim brothers than a pious and saintly person!

An authentic hadith records that a man died in Khayber, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Offer a funeral prayer for your friend. He has stolen something of the war booty." The Muslims searched the deceased's personal effects and found less than two dirham worth of beads in them.

In another sahih hadith 'Ata reported that a funeral prayer may be offered for an illegitimate child, and his mother, and for those who curse each other,[80] as well as the person who is killed in requital, and the person stoned to death, and the person who flees from the battlefield and is put to death for it. 'Ata said: "I will never abstain from offering a funeral prayer for a person who says: 'I bear witness that there is no deity except Allah.' Allah says: 'It is not fitting for the Prophet and those who believe to pray for forgiveness for pagans, even though they be of kin, after it is clear that they are companions of the Fire'."[81]

Another authentic hadith says that Ibrahim An-Nakh'i said: "Our predecessors never eschewed attending a funeral prayer for any Muslim. They offered the funeral prayer for those who had committed suicide, and it is a sunnah to offer funeral prayer for those who are stoned to death." In another sound hadith Qatadah reported: "I do not know of any scholar who refused to offer a funeral prayer for anyone witnessing that 'there is no god but Allah'." Ibn Sirin, according to a sahih hadith, said: "I do not know of any Muslim who considers it a sin to offer a funeral prayer for another Muslim."

Abu Ghalib reported: "I asked Abu Amamah Al-Bahili: 'What if a man is known to drink liquor. Should a funeral prayer be offered for him?' He said: 'Yes, for he might [at least] once in his life, while lying down for rest, have

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[78] Qur'an 49:10

[79] Qur'an 9:71

[80] In cases of *Lu'an*, for instance, when in the absence of any evidence of a spouse's adultery both the man and wife are required to swear an oath that he/she is telling the truth or face being cursed by Allah if they were lying.

[81] Qur'an 9:113

said: "There is no deity but Allah," and he might have been forgiven by Allah'." In a sahih hadith Al-Hasan is reported to have said: "Funeral prayer will be offered for all those who declare 'There is no deity but Allah.' It will be offered for all Muslims; for it is an act of intercession on behalf of the deceased."

Funeral Prayer for a Non-believer

A Muslim may not pray for a non-believer, for Allah says: "Nor do you ever pray for any of them that dies, nor stand at his grave, for they rejected Allah and His Messenger,"[82] "It is not fitting for the Prophet and those who believe to pray for forgiveness for pagans, even though they be of kin, after it is clear to them that they are companions of the Fire. And Ibrahim prayed for his father's forgiveness only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became clear to him that he (his father) was an enemy to Allah, he dissociated himself from him."[83]

Likewise no prayer may be offered for their children, for what applies to their parents applies to them as well, except for children who accept Islam, because one of their parents was a Muslim or they die or are taken prisoner separately from either or both of their parents, then a funeral prayer may be offered for the children.

Funeral Prayer on a Grave

It is permissible to offer funeral prayer for a deceased anytime after his burial, even if a prayer was offered prior to his burial. As mentioned above, the Prophet, peace be upon him, offered funeral prayer for the martyrs of Uhud after eight years. Zaid ibn Thabit reported: "Once we went out with the Prophet, peace be upon him. When we reached al-Baqi'[84] we noticed a newly dug grave. The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked about it and was told that was the grave of such and such a woman. At this he said: 'Why did you not inform me of her death?' They replied, 'O Prophet of Allah! You were fasting and were resting at the time and we did not want to bother you.' He said: 'Do not do that again. So long as I am with you, make sure you inform me when any one among you dies, for my prayers for the deceased is a mercy for them.' Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, went to the grave. We stood in rows behind him and he offered a funeral prayer for her with four *takbirs*." This hadith has been reported by Ahmad, Nasa'i, Al-Baihaqi, Al-Hakim and Ibn Hibban. The last two reporters regard it as a sound hadith.

Tirmidhi said: This has been the practice of most of the scholars, the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them), as well as others. Ash-Shafi'i, Ahmad, and Ishaq hold the same view. This hadith also shows that the Prophet, peace be upon him, offered funeral prayer at a grave when a

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[82] Qur'an 9:84

[83] Qur'an 9:113-114

[84] Famous cemetery in Madinah, where a large number of the Prophet's companions are buried.

funeral prayer had already been offered by his Companions for the deceased before her burial, for they could not bury her without a funeral prayer. From this hadith it is also obvious that praying for the dead (before the burial) was a common practice of the Companions, and was not limited only to the Prophet, peace be upon him.

Ibn Al-Qayyim said: "These proven traditions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, do not contradict the sound hadith that reports the statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him: 'Do not sit by the graves, or offer prayer facing them.' This is a sound hadith that bids us not to sit or pray at the graves. What is forbidden is to offer formal prayer (*salah*) facing a grave. Offering a funeral prayer at the grave is not forbidden, for funeral prayer does not have to be offered at any specific place. It is rather better offered outside a mosque than inside it. The funeral prayer at the grave is similar to offering it beside the coffin. In either case the prayer is offered for the deceased, and his body, whether it is in the coffin or in the grave, remains in the same position. Offering prayers other than funeral prayers are forbidden at graves, for there is a risk that this may turn these graveyards into mosques, against which the Prophet, peace be upon him, warned us. He cursed those who turn graves into places of worship, saying: 'Some evil people will be overtaken by the Day of Judgement, including those (evil people) who turn graves into mosques.' This warning has no bearing on an act that the Prophet, peace be upon him, repeatedly performed."

Funeral Prayer for an Absentee and for a Person who has Disappeared

Offering a funeral prayer for an absent person in another city is permissible, whether the city is near or far. In such a case those offering funeral prayer should stand facing the *qiblah*, even if the city where the absentee is located is not in the direction of the *qiblah*. After making an intention to pray for the absentee, *takbirs* should be said as they are normally said in funeral prayer over a deceased who is present. This is based on a hadith reported by the group on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, informed people about the death of Negus the day he died, and then took them out to offer funeral prayer for him. There he arranged his Companions in rows and said four *takbirs*.

Ibn Hazm said: "The funeral prayer for an absentee may be performed by a group of people under an imam. The Prophet, peace be upon him, offered a funeral prayer for Negus, who had died in Ethiopia, with his Companions standing in rows behind him. There is consensus among the Companions regarding this issue, and it should not be overlooked. Abu Hanifah and Malik, however, disagree with this view, but they have no ground for this disagreement."

Offering Funeral Prayer in a Mosque

There is no harm in offering funeral prayer in a mosque, if there is no danger of it becoming unclean. This is based on a narration of Muslim from 'Aishah who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, offered a funeral prayer for Suhail ibn Baida in the mosque, and the Companions likewise offered funeral prayer for Abu Bakr and 'Umar in the mosque, and no one objected to it, because the funeral prayer is similar to other (formal) prayer."

Abu Hanifah and Malik do not approve of it, citing a hadith of the Prophet, peace be upon him, to the effect that whoever offers a funeral prayer in the mosque would have nothing (i.e. no reward). This statement not only contradicts the practice of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his Companions, but is also a weak hadith due to other reasons. Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: "This is a weak hadith, and is reported through a single transmitter, Salih, the freed slave of Al-Tawamah, and he is an unreliable narrator. Some scholars, however, hold that this hadith of the Prophet, peace be upon him, is sound, and the words, reported by Abu Daw'ud, "Whoever offers a funeral prayer in a mosque would have nothing," mean such a person would not incur any burden (of sin). Ibn Al-Qayyim said: 'It was not the usual practice of the Prophet, peace be upon him, to offer a funeral prayer in the mosque. Rather he would usually offer funeral prayers outside the mosque except when for some reason he had to offer it in the mosque. In certain cases he did offer funeral prayer in the mosque, as in the case of Ibn Baida, which shows that funeral prayer may be offered either inside or outside the mosque, but to do so outside the mosque is preferable."

Funeral Prayer in the Graveyard

A majority of jurists disapprove of offering funeral prayer in a graveyard. This is the view of 'Ali, Abd-Allah ibn 'Amr, and Ibn 'Abbas, and also of 'Ata, An-Nakh'i, Ash-Shafi'i, Ishaq, and Ibn Al- Mundhir, and they cite the Prophet's hadith: "The entire earth is a mosque except for a graveyard and a bathroom."

In a report from Ahmad it is said: "There is no harm in offering a funeral prayer (as distinct from formal *salah*) in a graveyard as the Prophet, peace be upon him, himself offered a funeral prayer over a deceased while he was buried in his grave. Abu Hurairah also offered a funeral prayer over the grave of 'Aishah in the middle of the cemetery of Al-Baqi', which was attended by Ibn 'Umar. And 'Umar ibn Abd al-'Aziz did likewise."

Women are Permitted to Offer Funeral Prayers

A woman, like a man, may offer a funeral prayer, singly or in a congregation. In fact, once when Umm 'Abdallah offered funeral prayer for 'Utbah, 'Umar waited until she finished. 'Aishah ordered the body of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas to be brought to her so that she could offer a funeral prayer over him.

An-Nawawi said: "Women may offer (funeral) prayer in congregation just as they are permitted to perform other sunnah prayers. Al-Hasan ibn Saleh, Sufiyan Al-Thawri, Ahmad, and the Hanafi school also hold the same view. Malik, however, is of the opinion that women should offer the funeral prayer individually.

The Most Worthy Person to Lead a Funeral Prayer

Jurists differ as to the most worthy person to lead a funeral prayer. Some said: "The most appropriate person is the legal guardian of the deceased, then the (Muslim) ruler, then the father of the deceased, grandfather, or great grandfather, then the son or the grandson, then the one closest in relationship. This is the opinion of the Maliki and Hanbali schools. Others said: The best person is the father, then the grandfather, then the son, then the grandson, then the brother, then the nephew, then the paternal uncle, and then his son in accordance with their blood ties with the deceased. This is the opinion of Ash-Shafi'i and Abu Yusaf. Abu Hanifah and Muhammad ibn Al-Hasan, however, are of the opinion that the preferred order is the (Muslim) ruler if present at the funeral, then the judge, then the imam of the locality, then the guardian of a deceased woman, then the nearest blood relative. Of the blood relatives, if both father and his son are present, the father should be given precedence.

Joining the Funeral Procession and Carrying the Coffin

A certain etiquette is recommended while walking in a funeral procession or carrying a coffin:

1) Carrying a coffin and accompanying it to the graveyard is recommended. According to the sunnah it is preferable to go all around the coffin while carrying it. Ibn Majah, Al-Baihaqi, and Abu Daw'ud At-Tayalisi report that Ibn Mas'ud said: "If one walks in a funeral procession and carries the coffin, one should do so from all the sides of the coffin, for this is a sunnah of Prophet, peace be upon him." But this is optional. Abu Sa'id reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Visit the sick, and follow the funeral procession, for it will (help) remind you of the Hereafter." This was narrated by Ahmad with a sound chain of narrators.

2) A funeral procession must proceed at a fast pace. The group reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Walk briskly while carrying a coffin, for if the deceased is righteous, you would be taking it to something better, and if he or she is an evil person, then you will be getting him or her off your necks." Ahmad, Nasa'i, and others reported that Abu Bakrah said: "If you had seen us following a funeral procession along with the Prophet, peace be upon him, you would have thought that we were jogging." Bukhari reported in his book on History that, when Sa'd ibn Mua'dh died, the Prophet, peace be upon him, walked at such a fast pace behind his funeral that our shoes came apart."

The author of *Al-Fath* said: "In short, it is preferable to walk fast in a funeral, but this should not harm or affect the coffin or put to hardship those carrying the coffin or following it, because that would defeat the Islamic goal of promoting hygiene and avoiding placing undue hardship on other Muslims."

Al-Qurtubi said: "This hadith means that people should not delay the burial, because such a delay is often the result of arrogance and vanity.

3) One may walk in front of the funeral, behind it, to its right side, or left side, or close to it. There is a difference of opinion among the scholars on this point.

The majority of the scholars hold that walking in front of the funeral is preferable, for the Prophet, peace be upon him, Abu Bakr, and 'Umar used to walk in front of it, as narrated by Ahmad, and compilers of *Sunan*.

The Hanafi school holds that walking behind a funeral is preferable, as is indicated from the words of the Prophet, peace be upon him, concerning following a funeral.

Anas ibn Malik is of the opinion that one may walk anywhere in a funeral procession, as mentioned above in the hadith of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "A rider should ride behind the funeral, whereas one on foot may walk behind it, or in front of it, or to its right side or left side, or close to it."

Apparently there is no hard or fast rule in this regard, and the difference of opinion in this regard is quite legitimate.

Abdur Rahman ibn Abza reported that Abu Bakr and 'Umar used to walk in front of a funeral, while 'Ali walked behind it. When told that Abu Bakr and 'Umar were walking in front of the funeral, 'Ali remarked: "They both know that walking behind a funeral is better than walking in front of it, just as the prayer of a person in congregation (*jama'ah*) is better than the prayer of one offering it alone. But Abu Bakr and 'Umar did so in order to make it easy for others." This was narrated by Al-Baihaqi and Ibn Abu Shaibah. Al-Hafiz said its chain of authorities is sound.

Riding behind the funeral, without a valid excuse, is disliked in the opinion of the majority of scholars. Doing so after the burial, is not disliked, however, and is quite acceptable, as indicated by a hadith narrated by Thawban, which says that the Prophet, peace be upon him, was brought a mount to ride during a funeral, but he declined. But, when he returned after the burial and was offered a mount, he rode on it. They asked him about this (why he declined to mount during the funeral procession) and he replied: "Verily, the angels were walking with the funeral, so I did not like to ride while the angels were walking. But, when the angels left, I rode the mount." This was narrated by Abu Daw'ud, Al-Baihaqi, and Al-Hakim, who said this hadith is sound according to the criterion of Muslim and Bukhari. Tirmidhi narrated that the Prophet, peace be upon him, walked with the funeral of Ibn Ad-Dahdah, but on his way back he rode on horseback. According to Tirmidhi this is a sound hadith.

This hadith does not contradict the other hadith in which the Prophet, peace be upon him, is reported to have said: "A rider must stay behind a

funeral," since this may imply that such an act is disliked, though permissible. The Hanafi school holds that there is no harm in riding, although it is better to walk unless for some valid reason one is unable to do so. And in light of the above hadith a rider should stay behind the funeral procession. Al-Khattabi said: "I know of no difference of opinion amongst scholars on the point that a rider should stay behind a funeral procession."

Actions to be Discouraged in a Funeral Procession

While accompanying a funeral procession, it is disliked to:

1) *Recite or raise one's voice or any similar activity.* Ibn Al-Mundhir related that Qais ibn 'Abbad said: "The Companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, disliked raising one's voice on three occasions, namely, funeral processions, when remembering Allah, and on the battlefield."

Sa'id ibn Al-Musaib, Sa'id ibn Jubair, Al-Hasan, An-Nakh'i, Ahmad, and Ishaq did not like it when anyone from the rear of the funeral procession exhorted others to pray for forgiveness of the deceased. Al-Awza'i said: This is a *bid'a* (innovation in religion). Fudhail ibn 'Amr said: "Once, while Ibn 'Umar was present at a funeral, he heard someone from behind saying: 'Pray for Allah's forgiveness for the deceased. May Allah forgive him.' Ibn 'Umar said: 'May Allah not forgive you'."

An-Nawawi said: "You should know that the right manner of accompanying a funeral procession is to remain quiet, as the pious among the previous generations of Muslims did. One should not raise one's voice for recitation or for the remembrance of Allah, or for anything else. Keeping quiet is better and is helpful in concentrating one's attention on the funeral rites, which is needed at that time. This is the correct position, and the fact that a large number of people do otherwise does not change it. There is a consensus among scholars that the way ignorant people recite in the funeral processions, artificially prolonging sounds of various words and mixing them up, is forbidden.

Mohammad 'Abduh issued a verdict concerning raising one's voice for the remembrance of Allah while following the funeral procession, in which he said: "In reference to the raising of one's voice in a funeral procession for remembrance of Allah, we find in *Al-Fath*, under the chapter on "Funerals," that it is disliked for a person walking in front of a funeral procession to make such remembrance loudly. If one wants to make any remembrance, one may do it in one's heart. Loud remembrance is something quite new, and there is no precedent for it from the days of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his Companions, or from the generation following them or their Successors. Such a practice must be discouraged and stopped."

2) *Carrying torches or fire in a funeral procession.* These are forbidden as they are vestiges of the Days of Ignorance. Ibn Al-Mundhir said: "This practice is disliked by all men of knowledge and scholars on record. Al-Baihaqi said: 'Aishah, 'Ubadah ibn Al-Samit, Abu Hurairah, Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri, and Asma, the daughter of Abu Bakr, all stated in their respective wills that their

funeral processions should not include anyone carrying fire (or torches). According to Ibn Majah, Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari, on his deathbed, directed his heirs, saying: "Do not follow my funeral procession carrying any censers (with fires in them to burn frankincense for its aromatic smoke and fragrance)." The people asked him: "Did you hear anything from the Prophet concerning this?" He said: "Yes, I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying so. [85]

If the burial takes place at night, however, fire or torches may be used for light. Tirmidhi has reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas that once at night the Prophet, peace be upon him, entered a grave to bury a dead person, and a lantern was given to him and he took it." Tirmidhi said: This hadith from Ibn 'Abbas is sound.

3) *Sitting down, when one is following a funeral, before those carrying the coffin put it down.* Bukhari said: "A person accompanying a funeral procession should not sit down until the coffin is placed on the ground, and if he sits he should be asked to stand up." He reports from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Stand up when you see a funeral procession, and he who accompanies it should not sit down until the coffin is placed on the ground." Bukhari also reports from Sa'id Al-Maqabari who narrated that his father said: "We were attending a funeral, and Abu Hurairah was holding Marwan's hand, and they both sat down before the coffin was placed on the ground. At this Abu Sa'id approached them, and taking Marwan by his hand said to him: 'Stand up! By Allah, this man (i.e., Abu Hurairah) knows that the Prophet, peace be upon him, has forbidden us (to sit)." Upon hearing this Abu Hurairah said: "He is right." This has also been reported by Al-Hakim, with the following addition: "When Abu Sa'id told Marwan to stand up, he stood up and then asked him: 'Why have you made me stand up?' At this Abu Sa'id related this hadith to him. Then Marwan asked Abu Hurairah why he had not informed him about that hadith. Abu Hurairah replied: 'You were walking ahead of me, so when you sat down I too sat down." Most of the Companions, their successors, the Hanafi and Hanbali schools, Al-Awza'i and Ishaq hold this view.

The followers of Ash-Shafi'i, however, hold that a person walking in front of a funeral procession may sit down before the coffin is placed on the ground. There is agreement among scholars that for those walking ahead of the funeral precession there is no harm if they arrive early at the place of burial and sit down before its arrival.

Tirmidhi said: "It is related from some knowledgeable Companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and others that they would walk ahead of a funeral procession, and would sit down if they reached the place of burial before the coffin. This is the opinion of Ash-Shafi'i, who holds that, if a funeral arrives while one is seated, one need not stand upon its arrival. Ahmad said: "There is no harm whether one stands up or remains seated upon its arrival."

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[85] Among the narrators of this hadith is a man called Abu Huraiz, the freed slave of Mu'awiyah, who is "unknown" amongst the narrators of hadith.

4) *Remain Seated When a Funeral Procession Passes by.* Ahmad has reported that Waqid ibn 'Amr ibn Sa'd ibn Mu'adh said: "I attended a funeral procession in the tribe of Banu Salimah. I stood up on seeing the funeral procession. Thereupon Naf'i ibn Jubair said to me: 'Sit down. I will give you the reason for this. Mas'ud ibn Al-Hakim Az-Zurrqi told me that he heard 'Ali ibn Abi Talib saying: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, commanded us to stand up upon seeing a funeral procession, but later on he would remain seated, and bade us to do the same." Muslim has reported it in these words: "We saw the Prophet, peace be upon him, standing, so we stood. Then he sat down, and we too sat. Tirmidhi said: "This hadith from 'Ali is sound, and it includes four of the successors of the Companions who related it successively. According to some people of knowledge this is the common practice."

Ash-Shafi'i said: "This is the most authentic report on the subject. This hadith abrogates the one cited previously which says: 'Stand up when you see a funeral procession.' Ahmad said: "One may or may not stand up for a funeral procession, depending on one's preference. He argues that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to stand up for a funeral, but later on he would remain seated. This is also the opinion of Ishaq ibn Ibrahim. Ahmad, Ishaq ibn Hubaib, and Ibn Al-Majishun of the Maliki school.

An-Nawawi said: "Considering all these opinions, standing up upon seeing a funeral procession is desirable." Al-Mutawalli and Ahmad also hold this view.

Ibn Hazm said: "Standing up upon seeing a funeral procession is recommended, even if it is a funeral of a disbeliever or a pagan, until the coffin is placed on the ground or disappears from sight. But if someone remains seated there is no harm. Those who hold it as a desirable act cite what is related by the group on the authority of Ibn 'Umar who reported from 'Amir ibn Rabi'ah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When you see a funeral procession stand up for it, and remain standing until it disappears from sight or (the coffin) is placed down on the ground." Ahmad said: "Whenever Ibn 'Umar saw a funeral procession he would stand up for it and would remain standing until it passed by."

Sahl ibn Hanif and Qais ibn Sa'd reported that they were sitting in Qadisiyyah[86] and a funeral procession passed by them. On seeing it both of them stood up for it. They were told it was the funeral of a non-Muslim. They said: "Once when a funeral procession was passing by, the Prophet, peace be upon him, stood up for it. And when told that it was funeral procession of a Jew, he exclaimed: "Does he (a Jew) not possess a soul?"[87] Ibn Mas'ud and Qais used to stand up for a funeral procession.

The wisdom behind standing, according to Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim, as stated in a hadith related from the Prophet, peace be upon him, is "to show respect to Him Who seizes the souls" or in the words of Ibn Hibban "as

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[86] A town in Syria.

[87] Bukhari and Muslim.

a mark of respect to Allah Who seizes the souls."

In short, there is disagreement on this issue among the scholars. Some disapprove of standing for a funeral procession, while others prefer it. Some leave it to the individual's discretion. Each of these scholars supports his stand with specific arguments, and one may follow any of these opinions.

5) *Permit Women to Accompany a Funeral Procession.* Umm 'Atiyah reported: "We were forbidden to accompany funeral processions, but this prohibition was not mandatory for us."[88] Abdullah ibn 'Amr reported: "Once while we were with the Prophet, peace be upon him, he saw a woman — whom we thought he did not recognize — so he waited until she reached him. It was Fatimah, his daughter. He asked her: 'What caused you to leave your house?' She said: 'I came to visit the family living in this house in order to offer my condolences and to comfort them in their grief.' He said: 'Did you accompany them to the graveyard?' She said: 'God forbid! How could I do that, when I know what you have said in this respect.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Had you accompanied the funeral procession to the graveyard, you would never have seen Paradise, not until your grandfather's father had seen it!'[89]

Muhammad ibn Al-Hanafiyyah reported that 'Ali said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, went out and saw a group of women sitting outside. When he asked them why they were sitting there, they told him that they were waiting for the funeral procession. He asked them: 'Are you going to wash the body?' They said: 'No.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked them: 'Are you going to carry the coffin?' They said: 'No.' He asked them: 'Will you place the body in the grave?' They said: 'No.' At this he said to them: 'Then go back to your homes with your sins and without gaining any reward."[90] Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn 'Umar, Abu Amamah, 'Aishah, Masruq, Al-Hasan, An-Nakh'i, Awza'i, Ishaq, and the Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hanbali schools hold this view. They all disapprove the participation of women in funeral processions. According to Malik, it is not disliked for an old woman to leave her home to attend a funeral. In his opinion, a young woman afflicted by the death of a dear one may also accompany a funeral procession without any disapproval, provided she is well covered and her presence does not cause any temptation.

Ibn Hazm contends that the argument put forth by the majority of scholars is not sound, and that it is permissible for women to accompany funeral processions. He said: "We do not disapprove of women attending a funeral procession, nor do we prevent them from doing so. Among the traditions

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[88] Reported by Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim & Ibn Majah.

[89] Reported by Ahmad, Al-Hakim, Nasa'i, and Baihaqi. The scholars, however, question the validity of this hadith, claiming it is not a sound hadith, because among its narrators is Rabi'ah ibn Saif, who is not trustworthy.

[90] Reported by Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim. But one of its narrators is Dinar ibn 'Omar, who is not reliable. Abu Hatim says he is not well known, Azdi describes him as *matruk* (unacceptable), and Al-Khalili in his *Al-Irshad* calls him "a liar."

reported on this subject there is no authentic hadith. There are either *mursal*[91] or *majhul* (unknown) or such as cannot be presented as an argument." Then he mentions the hadith by Umm 'Atiyyah and says: "Even if it were a sound hadith it does not prove prohibition, but merely shows that it is disliked. In fact the reverse is true if we take into account the hadith narrated by Shu'bah on the authority of Waki', who in turn narrated it from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, who heard it from Wahab ibn Kaysan, who heard it from Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn 'Ata who reported it from Abu Hurairah that once when the Prophet, peace be upon him, attended a funeral, 'Umar saw a woman there and yelled at her. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Leave her, O 'Umar! Verily her eyes shed tears, the soul feels the pangs, and the promised hour is near."[92] In a sound hadith it is reported from Ibn 'Abbas that he did not regard it as a disliked act.

Not Attending a Funeral due to Some Forbidden Acts

The author of *Al-Mughni* said: "If one sees or hears something that is forbidden while attending a funeral, and one is capable of countering and rectifying it, one should do so. If not, then one may do one of two things: voice his disapproval of it, and continue with the funeral which will free one from any responsibility of any such disapproved acts, without abandoning the good for the bad. The second course open to a person in such a case is to leave the funeral procession, especially when one is able to leave it, so that one's continued participation will not lead one to hear or see a forbidden thing."

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[91] *Mursal*: Report of a successor (*tab'i*)directly from the Prophet without mentioning the Companion who might have heard it directly.

[92] The chain of authorities of this hadith is sound.

Chapter Five

BURIAL

A Collective Obligation

There is a consensus that burying a dead body and covering it is a collective obligation (*fard kifayah*). If some Muslims bury the dead body, it would absolve the rest of them from this obligation. Allah, the Almighty, says: "Have We not caused the earth to hold within itself the living and the dead?"[93]

The majority of scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to bury the dead anytime during the day or night. The Prophet, peace be upon him, buried at night a man, who used to remember Allah aloud during the night. Similarly 'Ali buried Fatimah at night. Abu Bakr, 'Uthman, 'Aishah, and Ibn Mas'ud were buried during the night as well.

Ibn 'Abbas reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, went into a grave one night and was given a lamp. Then he lifted the body from the side toward the *qiblah*, saying: "May Allah be merciful to you. You used to cry a lot and often recited the Qur'an." After this the Prophet, peace be upon him, said four *takbirs*."[94] Tirmidhi said: "Most scholars consider the burial of the dead at night permissible, provided the rights of the deceased are not neglected.

The same applies to offering a funeral prayer for the deceased. The Prophet, peace be upon him, commanded his followers not to bury the deceased at night if it is feared that any of his rights might be neglected. Night time burial in such a case is disliked.

One day the Prophet, peace be upon him, delivered a sermon and mentioned one of his companions who had died and had been wrapped in a short shroud and buried during the night. The Prophet, peace be upon him, expressed his disapproval of burying someone at night unless one is compelled to do so.[95] Jabir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Do not bury your dead during the night unless you are compelled to do so."[96]

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[93] Qur'an 77:25-26.

[94] Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it a sound hadith.

[95] Muslim.

[96] Ibn Majah.

Burial at Sunrise, at Midday, or at Sunset

There is a consensus that a body may be buried during any of these three times whenever there is danger of it decomposing otherwise. If there is no such danger, its burial during these times is still permissible, according to the majority of scholars, provided that it is not done so on purpose, as reported by Ahmad, Muslim, and the compilers of Sunan on the authority of 'Uqbah who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade us from offering prayer or burying our dead at three times: at sunrise, until the sun rises high in the sky; at noon, when the sun is above one's head until it declines a little; and when the sun begins to go down until it sets."

The Hanbali school holds that in light of the above hadith burial during these times is undesirable without exception.

Digging a Deep Grave is Desirable

The purpose of burial is to hide the body in a pit in order to prevent its stench from fouling the atmosphere, and to save it from being eaten by various beasts and birds. If these conditions are met and this purpose is served, then one has carried out one's responsibility. It is encouraged, however, to make the depth of the grave equal to the height of an average man. This is based on a hadith reported by Nasa'i and Tirmidhi (who considers it a sound hadith) from Hisham ibn 'Amer who said: "We complained to the Prophet, peace be upon him, on the day of the battle of Uhud, saying: 'O Allah's Messenger! Digging a separate grave for every body is a very hard job.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Dig, dig deeper, dig well, and bury two or three bodies in each grave.' The Companions asked him: 'Who should be put in the graves first?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Put those most learned in the Qur'an first.' My father, the narrator added, was the third of the three who were put in one grave."

Ibn Abi Shaibah and Ibn Al-Mundhir reported that 'Umar said: "Dig a grave deep enough for a man's height and make it broader." According to Abu Hanifah and Ahmad the grave should be deep enough for half of the average height of a man, but if dug deeper, it is better.

A *Lahd* is Better than an Ordinary Grave

Lahd is a crevice on the side of a grave facing the *qiblah*, which is covered with unburnt bricks like a house with a roof. A regular grave, on the other hand, is a pit dug in the ground, with the body placed in it and then sealed off with unburnt bricks and covered to form a ceiling. Either of these two methods is permissible, but the first one — *lahd* — is preferable in the light of a hadith reported by Ahmad and Ibn Majah on the authority of Anas who said: "When the Prophet, peace be upon him, died, there were two grave diggers. One usually dug the *lahd* and the other a regular tomb-like grave. The Companions

said: 'Let us seek guidance from our Lord.' Then they asked each of them to dig a grave, and decided the grave of the one who finished first be chosen for the burial of the Prophet's remains. The one who dug the *lahd* finished first, so they buried the remains of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in a *lahd*."

This hadith shows that both forms are permissible. The fact that the *lahd* is preferable is indicated by a tradition transmitted by Ahmad and the Compilers of the Sunan on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas who reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: '*Lahd* is for us, and digging a pit (i.e., a regular grave) for others.'"

Placing a Body in the Grave

It is sunnah to place a body in the grave with its feet first, if this is possible and can be done easily. This is based on a hadith reported by Abu Daw'ud, Ibn Abi Shaibah, and Al-Baihaqi that Abdallah ibn Zaid placed a body with its feet first in the grave and said, "This is sunnah." If this is not easy, then a body could be placed in the grave in any manner possible.

Ibn Hazm said: "A body may be placed in the grave in any manner possible, from the direction of the *qiblah*, or from a direction opposite to it, with its head first, or with its feet first, for there is no explicit instruction regarding this in the texts."

Placing the Body Facing the *Qiblah*, Praying for the Deceased, and Loosening the Shroud

The practice of the learned ones has been to place the body on its right side facing the *qiblah*. The person placing the body in the grave should say: "In the Name of Allah, and in accordance with the tradition of Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him." Then he should loosen the shroud. Ibn 'Umar reported that when a body was placed in the grave, the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to say:

Bismillah wa 'ala sunnat rasulillah «بسم الله وعلى سنة رسول الله»

"In the name of Allah, and in accordance with the tradition of Allah's Messenger or the practice of Allah's Messenger."[97]

Placing Clothes in the Grave is Disliked

The majority of jurists dislike the idea of placing a garment, a pillow, or the like for the deceased in the grave. Ibn Hazm, however, sees nothing wrong in placing a piece of garment under the body in the grave, in light of a hadith reported by Muslim from Ibn 'Abbas who said: "A red piece of cloth was

[97] Reported by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Nasa'i, who transmitted it both as a *mauquf* hadith (its chain of transmitters stopping at a Companion), and as a *musnad* (uninterruptedly from the Prophet himself).

placed in the grave of the Prophet, peace be upon him." Ibn Hazm says apparently it was Allah's Will to permit them to do so, because His Prophet, the innocent and guiltless, and others who practiced it were, according to the consensus, indeed the best of men, and none of them ever objected to it."

The scholars consider it desirable, however, for the head of the deceased to be placed on a brick, a stone, or on the ground with his right cheek on a brick or some other similar thing, and with his shroud removed from his face so that his left cheek is open to the soil. 'Umar advised his heirs: "After having placed my body in the grave, leave my cheek open to the soil." Similarly Ad-Dahak in his will gave instructions that his shroud should be untied and his cheek exposed. It is preferred if something, some bricks or stones or soil, is placed to support the body so as not to leave it flat on its back.

Abu Hanifah, Malik, and Ahmad hold that a piece of cloth may be spread over a female body, but not over a male body, when lowering it into the grave. The Shafi'i school, however, is of the opinion that doing so is desirable for both male and female.

Throwing Three Handfuls of Soil over the Grave

It is desirable to encourage those attending the burial to throw three handfuls of soil over the grave from the head of the body. This is based on a hadith by Ibn Majah which says: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, once offered a funeral prayer and then went to the deceased's grave and threw three handfuls of soil from near the deceased's head." Abu Hanifah, Ash-Shafi'i, and Ahmad hold that when throwing the first handful one should say, "Of this (i.e. the earth) We created you," and on the second one should say, "And to it shall We cause you to return," and on the third handful one should say, "And of it We shall cause you to be resurrected a second time." This is based on a hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said this when his daughter Umm al-Kulthum was laid in her grave. Ahmad said: "Nothing is required to be said while throwing handfuls of soil over the grave because this is a weak hadith.

Praying for the Deceased After its Burial

After the burial, it is desirable to pray for forgiveness of the deceased and acceptance (of his conduct by Allah), because at this time he is being questioned about his life. It is reported by 'Uthman: "After burial the Prophet, peace be upon him, would stand by the grave of the deceased and say: "Seek forgiveness for your brother and pray for his acceptance, because he is now being questioned about it."[98] Ruzain reported: "After the deceased was buried 'Ali used to pray: 'O Allah! This is Your servant, who is now a guest of Yours, and You are the best host. Forgive him, and expand the entrance into heaven

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[98] This hadith is reported by Abu Daw'ud and al-Hakim, who considers it a sound hadith. Al-Bazzar says: "This is the only report from the Prophet (peace be upon him) on this subject.

for him." Ibn 'Umar liked to recite the first and the last few verses of Surah Al-Baqarah by the grave after the burial was over.[99]

Prompting the Deceased After the Burial

Ash-Shafi'i and some other scholars prefer that a deceased[100] be "prompted" after the burial. This is based on a report by Sa'id ibn Mansur from Rashid ibn Sa'd and Damarah ibn Habib and Hakim ibn 'Umair. They said: "After the grave is leveled and the people leave, one should stand by the grave and say three times to the deceased: 'O so and so, say: "There is no god but Allah, I bear witness that there is no god but Allah",' 'O so and so, say: "Allah is my Lord, Islam is my *din*, and Muhammad is my prophet." ' And then one should leave the site." This is reported, without any comment, by Al-Hafiz in his book *Al-Talkhis*. At-Tabarani reported that Abu Amamah said: "When one of your brethren passes away and you have leveled the ground over his grave, you should stand by the grave's head and say: 'O so and so, son of so and so,' for the deceased will hear him, but he cannot respond. Then he should say 'O so and so, and son of so and so, whereby the deceased will sit up in his grave. Then he should say: 'O so and so, son of so and so, at which the deceased says: "Guide me, may Allah be merciful to you,' but you cannot hear him. Then he should say to the deceased: 'Remember the faith with which you left this world, and remember to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, and remember that you have accepted Allah as your Lord, Islam as your religion, Muhammad as your Prophet and the Qur'an as your guide.' At this Munkar and Nakir (the two angels appointed to question the people in the graves) will hold each other's hand and say: 'Let us go! Why should we sit for a person who has been taught this.'" A man asked: "O Allah's Messenger! What if one did not know the name of the deceased's mother?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied: "In such a case, one should call him by his first mother, Eve, and say: 'O so and so, O son of Eve)."[101] Haithami refers to this hadith and says there are some narrators in its chain whom he did not know as trustworthy.

An-Nawawi said: "The above hadith, even if it is a weak one, would be considered a source of reference. The scholars of hadith and others agree that in matters such as virtue, exhortation to good, and warning against evil, even the weak ahadith are admissible. The above hadith is, however, supported by other evidence including the hadith in which the Prophet, peace be upon him, is reported to have asked his Companions, 'pray that he be supported.' Another is the hadith about the will made by 'Amr ibn Al-'As. Both of these ahadith are sound. The people of Syria still act on this, when the occasion arises, until this

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[99] Reported by Al-Baihaqi with a sound chain of narrators.

[100] A deceased if he or she is an adult, but not in the case of a child.

[101] Al-Hafiz in his book *Al Talkhis* said that the chain of narrators of this hadith is sound. Ad-Diya' in his *Al-Ahkam* has also described it as a sound hadith. There is in its chain of narrators one called 'Asim ibn Abdullah who is a weak narrator.

very day."

Both the Maliki school, according to general report, and the Hanbali school consider prompting the deceased reprehensible. Al-Athram said: "I asked (Imam) Ahmad ibn Hanbal: 'This is what they do when the deceased is buried. A man stands by the graveside and says: "O so and so and son of so and so (his mother's name").' Ahmad said: 'I have never seen anyone doing this except the Syrians when Abu Al-Mughirah died.'" He transmitted something about the subject from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Maryam according to which their elders said that they used to do it. Isma'il ibn 'Ayyash related the hadith reported by Abu Amamah.

The Sunnah Concerning Graveyards

The sunnah is to raise the grave at least one hand above the ground so it is known that it is a grave. It is forbidden to raise it more than that. This is based on a narrative reported by Muslim and others from Harun that Thamamah ibn Shufayy told him: "Once we were with Fadalah bin 'Ubayd in the Roman land of Brudis. One of our companions died and upon burying him we were ordered by Fudalah ibn 'Ubayd to level his grave. Then Fudalah said: 'I heard Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, ordering people to level the graves of the deceased." It is reported from Abul al-Hayaj al-Asadi who said 'Ali bin Abu Talib told me: "Should I not instruct you to do as the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, instructed me? Do not leave a statue standing without removing it. Do not leave a grave raised without leveling it."

Tirmidhi said: "Some scholars act upon this opinion. They disapprove of raising the grave more than necessary to indicate that it is a grave, and so people will not step or sit on it." Muslim governors used to destroy cemetery structures not permitted by the law, in accordance with the authentic sunnah. Ash-Shafi'i said: "I prefer that the soil used for a grave be no more than that dug for that grave. I like to see a grave raised above the ground the length of a hand or so. I prefer not to erect a structure over a grave or to whitewash it, for indeed this resembles decoration and vanity, and death is not the time for either of these things. I have never seen the graves of the Muhajirin or Ansar plastered. I have seen the Muslim authorities destroying structures in graveyards, and I have not seen any jurists object to this."

Ash-Shawkani said: "It is apparent that raising graves more than what is legally permitted is forbidden. The followers of Ahmad, a group of the followers of Ash-Shafi'i, and Malik are of this opinion. An opinion that raised graves are not prohibited because this practice occurred during the time of the first and later generations without disapproval, which is the position of Imam Yahya and Mahdi in al-Ghayth, is not correct. This argument is based only on their silence about the practice, and silence is not proof when a matter rests on mere assumption, for prohibition of raising graves is presumptive."

Included in the discussion of raising the grave are dome buildings, shrines built on graves, and erecting mosques around graves.The Prophet, peace be

upon him, cursed those who did that. The practice of erecting buildings around graves and beautifying them causes corruption, which Islam seeks to eliminate.

Part of such a corruption is exaggerating the importance of graves, in accordance with the superstitious belief of the ignorant, similar to the belief of non-believers in their idols, that these monuments can bring benefit or prevent harm. Thus they travel to these graves for fulfillment of their needs or achievement of their goals. They ask those in the graves what believers should ask only of their Lord. They ride horses to them, touch them, and seek their aid. In general, they do exactly what the pre-Islamic people used to do with their idols.

Despite this disgraceful, reprehensible evil and hideous disbelief, how many people dare to take a stand for the cause of Allah, or evince any uneasiness for the defense of the true *din*? Where are the scholars and students, and the rulers, the ministers, and the kings, who are obliged to teach the truth? Various reports reaching us leave little doubt that many of these grave adorers, in fact most of them, when confronted and asked under oath to reject such idolatry would readily take a solemn oath falsely by Allah. But if you then ask them, "(Swear) by your spiritual leader and your saint, so-and-so," they will ponder, apologize, refuse, and confess the truth. This is one of the clearest proofs that their polytheism is indeed worse than that of the Christians and others who say: "Allah, the Exalted, is the second of two or the third of three."

O scholars of Islam! O kings of Islam! What calamity to Islam is worse than disbelief? What tribulation for this religion is worse than worshipping others than Allah? What misfortune for Muslims can equal this misfortune? Is there any more serious abomination than this open polytheism?

> You might be heard if you called the living,
> But there is no life in him whom you call;
> Had there been a fire in which you blew, there would have been
> light; but you blew in the sand.

The scholars have issued clear legal verdicts concerning the destruction of mosques and domes built in cemeteries.

Ibn Hajar said in his *az-Zawajir*:[102] "We should not hesitate to destroy mosques and domes built over graves. These are worse than the mosque of ad-Dirar, because these things are erected in disobedience to the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, has forbidden this and has ordered the destruction of raised graves. Every lamp or lantern placed over a grave must be removed. It is not correct to stop at a grave or make a vow at it.

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[102] This is a collection of legal verdicts, published when king Al-Zahir decided to destroy all the buildings in the graveyards. Coeval Islamic scholars collectively supported him saying to do so was incumbent upon the ruler.

Making Humps over Graves and Flattening Them

Jurists agree that it is permissible either to make a little hump over the grave or to flatten it. At-Tabari said: "I dislike it for a grave to be prepared in any way other than these two: it should be either leveled with the ground or raised with a hump over it, but no higher than one hand, as is the common practice among Muslims. Leveling the grave differs from flattening it completely. Jurists differ concerning which of these two methods is best. Al-Qadi 'Iyad has reported from the major scholars that it is best to make a hump over the grave because Sufyan an-Nammar told him that he had seen the grave of the Prophet, peace be upon him, with a hump over it."[103] This is the opinion of Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ahmad, al-Mazani, and many scholars of the Shafi'i school. Ash-Shafi'i's opinion, however, is that because of the order of the Prophet, peace be upon him, leveling is best.

Placing a Distinguishing Mark on a Grave

It is permissible to place a mark, such as a stone or a piece of wood, over a grave so that it can be recognized. This is based on a hadith reported by Ibn Majah from Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, "placed a rock over 'Uthman ibn Maz'eun's grave so that it could be recognized." In *az-Zawa'id* it is stated that its chain of narrators is sound. Abu Daw'ud reported it in the hadith of al-Muttalib ibn Abi Wada'ah which has the following words: "He carried a rock and placed it by the headside of the grave and said, 'I want to mark my brother's grave and then bury beside it whoever else of my family dies.'" This hadith indicates that it is preferable for relatives of the deceased to be buried in adjacent spots because it makes it easier for those who visit their graves to pray for them.

Taking Off Shoes in Cemeteries

Most scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to wear shoes in a cemetery. Jarir ibn Hazim said: "I saw al-Hasan and Ibn Sirin walking with their shoes on in a cemetery." Anas reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'When a servant of Allah is put into a grave and his companions leave, he can hear the sound of their sandals'."[104] The scholars deduce from this hadith that it is permissible to walk in a cemetery with one's shoes on since the only way the dead would hear the sound of their sandals is when they were wearing them.

Ahmad disliked, however, wearing dyed shoes[105] in graveyards. This is based on a report by Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah from Bushair, the

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[103] Bukhari

[104] Reported by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daw'ud, and Nasa'i.

[105] *Sibtiyah* (Arabic), a type of shoes dyed with pods of a species of sant tree.

freed slave of the Prophet, peace be upon him, who said: "Once the Prophet, peace be upon him, noticed a man wearing shoes while walking in the cemetery. He said to him: 'O you who are wearing the *sibtiyyah* (shoes). Woe to you. Take off your *sibtiyyah* shoes.' When the man recognized the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, he took them off and threw them away."

Al-Khattabi said: "The order of the Prophet, peace be upon him, may indicate that he disliked this because of the people involved in them. The *sibtiyyah* shoes were worn by privileged people given to luxury. The Prophet, peace be upon him, liked those visiting the graveyards to be humble and unpretentious. Ahmad holds that wearing shoes is disliked only when done without any valid excuse. If there is a genuine reason for wearing shoes, such as, thorns or impurities, then one may keep one's shoes on.

The Prohibition against Covering Graves

Covering graves or tombs is not permissible, because this involves unnecessary expense for an invalid cause, and may mislead the common man. 'Aishah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, left on a raid. I covered the door with a piece of cloth. The Prophet, peace be upon him, noticed the cloth when he returned. He pulled at it until he tore it. Then he said: 'Allah did not order us to cover stones and clay'."[106]

Building Mosques or Placing Lights on Graves

There are many sound and clear ahadith concerning the unlawfulness of building mosques over graves or putting lights on them.

Abu Hurairah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'May Allah destroy the Jews, because they used the graves of their prophets as places of worship."[107]

Ibn 'Abbas reported: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, cursed the women who visit graves and those who build mosques and place lights on them."[108]

Abdullah Al-Bujali said: "I heard Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, five nights before his death, saying: 'I declare myself innocent before Allah of having an intimate friend from among you. Indeed, Allah, the Mighty and the Majestic, has taken me as an intimate friend just as he took Ibrahim as His intimate friend. Had I to take an intimate friend from among you, I would have taken Abu Bakr as my intimate friend. Before you there was a group who turned the graves of their prophets and their righteous ones into mosques. Do not turn graves into mosques. I forbid you to do that'."[109]

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[106] Reported by Bukhari and Muslim.

[107] Bukhari and Muslim.

[108] Reported by Ahmad and other compilers of the *Sunan* except Ibn Majah. Tirmidhi considers it a sound hadith.

[109] Muslim

Abu Hurairah narrated: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'May Allah curse Jews and Christians for they turned the graves of their Prophets into places of worship'."[110]

'Aishah reported: "Umm Habibah and Umm Salamah mentioned to Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, a church in which they saw drawings while in Abyssinia, whereupon he said: 'Those people used to build a place of worship over the grave of a righteous man among them when he died and make such drawings in it.These will be the worst of people in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection."[111]

The author of *Al-Mughni* said: "It is not permissible to build mosques around graves because of the statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him, 'May Allah curse the women who visit graves and those who build mosques and place lights over them.'"[112]

If it were permissible, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would not have cursed those who did it. Moreover, this practice wastes money and encourages adoration of graves similar in spirit to the adoration of idols. Because of this report it is not permissible to build mosques over graves. Besides, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "May Allah curse the Jews who turned the graves of their prophets into places of worship," in order to warn others against pursuing a similar course.[113]

'Aishah said: "The only reason the grave of Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, was not made prominent was to stop people from turning it into a mosque." Designating certain graves as places of prayers is similar to adoring idols and seeking their pleasure. The worship of idols started with the adoration of the dead, making images of them, touching them, and offering prayers at their graves.[114]

Slaughtering Animals on the Graves

The Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade the slaughtering of animals at graves, which was practiced in the Days of Ignorance out of arrogance and self-conceit in order to flaunt one's wealth. Anas reported: "The Prophet, peace be

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[110] Muslim

[111] Bukhari and Muslim.

[112] Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Nasa'i.

[113] Muslim and Bukhari.

[114] The commentator on this said: "It points to what Bukhari narrated from Ibn Abbas concerning the reason why the people of Noah worshipped idols. They were known as Wadd, Sawa', Yaghuth, Ya'uq, and Nasr. These were pious people of whom they made images in order to remember them after their death and imitate them. Due to the lack of knowledge that became prevalent among the people, Satan made it appear beautiful to worship their images and likenesses, and to honor them, wipe over them, and approach them. Wiping them is passing one's hand over them to invoke their blessing and intercession. The same was done to the graves of righteous people. This practice was initiated by idolaters, and then passed on to Jews and Christians and then to Muslims. Such objects are equivalent to idols."

upon him, said: 'There is no slaughtering (of animals on graves) in Islam."[115] Abdul Razzaq said: "They used to slaughter a cow or a sheep by the grave."

Al-Khattabi said: "During the Days of Ignorance the people used to slaughter camels by the graves of generous people. They used to say: 'We would like him to be rewarded for his deeds. He used to slaughter them when he was alive and feed them to his guests. We slaughter these camels at his grave to feed the lions and birds, so that he may continue feeding others even after his death as he used to do while he was alive'." A poet said:

I slaughtered my she-camel at the grave of my king,
with a bright sharp sword,
meticulously cleaned by polishers,
on the grave of someone, who, had I died before him,
would have willingly slaughtered his mounts by my grave.

They believed in resurrection after death. Some people believed that if a camel was slaughtered by the grave of a person, he would be restored to life mounted on it on the Day of Resurrection, whereas otherwise at his resurrection, having no mount, he would have to walk on foot.

Prohibition of Sitting, Leaning, and Walking on Graves

It is not permissible to sit on a grave, or lean on it, or walk over it. This is based on a hadith reported by 'Amr bin Hazm who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, saw me leaning on a grave, so he said: 'Do not harm the dweller in this grave or do not harm him.'"[116] Abu Hurairah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'It is better for you to sit on a glowing coal that burns through your clothes to your skin than to sit on a grave."[117] In the opinion of Ibn Hazm this statement amounts to an outright prohibition because of the warning contained in it. He said this is the opinion of a group of the early Muslims of whom Abu Hurairah is one.

The majority of scholars hold that such an act is merely disapproved. An-Nawawi said: "Ash-Shafi'i [118] and the companions mentioned in various narrations disapprove of sitting on a grave, holding it to be *makruh tanzihi*,[119] a term well-known to jurists.The majority of scholars including An-Nakha'i, Al-Laith, Ahmad, and Daw'ud hold this view.They also disapprove of reclining or leaning on a grave."

Ibn 'Umar, Abu Hanifah, and Malik are of the opinion that it is permissible to sit on a grave. Malik said: "We think that prohibition of sitting and leaning on graves means prohibition of using them to answer the call of nature."[120] He

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[115] Abu Daw'ud

[116] Reported by Ahmad, who considers its chain of narrators as sound.

[117] Reported by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah.

[118] See Al-Shafi'i's work *Al-Umm*.

[119] *Makruh* is divided into *makruh tahrimi* "that which is nearly unlawful without it being actually so," and *makruh tanzihi* "that which approaches the lawful."

[120] *Al-Muwatta*.

cited a weak hadith in this regard. Ahmad considers the interpretation of Malik weak and said: "This is not an argument." An-Nawawi said that this interpretation is weak or false. Likewise, Ibn Hazm regards it invalid for a number of reasons. This difference of opinion concerns sitting on graves. However, there is agreement among the jurists, however, that sitting on the graves to answer the call of nature is unlawful. The jurists also agree on the permissibility of walking over graves if necessary, when for instance, there is no other way of reaching the grave of one's dear one.

Prohibition of Whitewashing or Writing on a Grave

Jabir reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade the whitewashing of a grave, sitting on it, or erecting any structure on it." [121] Tirmidhi reported this hadith with this wording: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade the whitewashing of graves, writing on them, building on them, or stepping on them." Nasa'i, reported it in these words: "The Prophet, peace be upon, forbade building over a grave, adding anything to it, whitewashing it, or writing on it."

The majority of scholars interpret this prohibition as an expression of disapproval, while Ibn Hazm takes it to mean that the act is unlawful. The wisdom behind it is that a grave is not made to last forever, but is sure to disintegrate with the passage of time. Whitewashing graves is decorating them with the beauty of this world for which the dead have no need. Others think that its wisdom lies in the fact that whitewashing is done by burning gypsum (brimstone): This view is supported by a narration of Zaid bin Arqam who said to a person who wanted to build something over his son's grave and whitewash it: "You are wrong and have done a useless thing.Nothing touched by fire should be brought near the grave." There is nothing wrong, however, in daubing it with clay. Tirmidhi said: "Some scholars, including Al-Hasan al-Basri, hold it permissible to coat the graves with clay."Ash-Shafi'i is also of the same view and sees no harm in giving the graves a coating of clay.

Ja'far bin Muhammad reported from his father: "The grave of the Prophet, peace be upon him, was raised one hand from the ground and was coated with red clay and some gravel." This was narrated by Abu Bakr An-Najjad, but Al-Hafiz did not comment on this in his *al-Talkhis*.

The scholars also disapprove of building graves with bricks or wood or burying the dead with a coffin unless the burial ground was wet or soft. If it is wet or soft, then it is permissible to use bricks and the like and to place the body in a coffin. It is reported from Mughirah that Ibrahim said: "The scholars preferred bricks of clay and straw, but disliked clay bricks; they preferred bamboo and disliked wood."

Concerning the hadith prohibiting writing on graves, it apparently in-

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[121] Reported by Ahmad, Muslim, Nasa'i, Abu Daw'ud, and Tirmidhi who said that it is a sound hadith.

cludes writing the name of the deceased or any other thing on the grave. Al-Hakim commented on this hadith and said: "Though its chain of narrators is sound, in practice, however, it was not followed." Many Muslims from the East and the West do write on the graves. This is a practice that was passed on from one generation to the next. Adh-Dhahabi said: "This hadith is an innovated one, and no prohibition is genuinely reported."

The Hanbali school holds that inscription on graves is prohibited, whether it is a portion of the Qur'an or the name of the deceased." The Shafi'i school agrees with this ruling, but they also hold: "If the grave is of a scholar or a righteous man, it is preferable to write his name on it to make it known."

The Maliki school holds that writing any portion of the Qur'an is not permissible, but writing the name and date of death of the deceased is disliked (*makruh*).

The Hanafi school disapproves of writing anything on the grave and considers it unlawful, except when it is feared that any trace of the grave might disappear. Ibn Hazm said: "It is not disapproved if the name of the deceased was engraved on a rock."

It is forbidden in a hadith "to add more soil than what was taken out when digging the grave." Al-Baihaqi has dealt with this under a separate chapter entitled, "No adding of soil to the grave in excess of what is taken therefrom."

Ash-Shawkani said that: "Adding apparently here means adding more soil than what was taken out while digging the grave." Some interpreted the addition to a grave as making a grave over another one. Ash-Shafi'i preferred, however, the first interpretation, saying that it was preferable not to add more soil than what was taken out while digging the grave which is preferred lest the grave be raised high. So long as the additional soil does not raise the grave higher than the ground, there is nothing wrong with it.

Burying More than One Body in One Grave

From the example of early generations, we learn that one body is to be buried in a grave. It is disliked if more than one body is buried in a grave, unless there is a large number of corpses, and there is a scarcity of graves, and it is impossible to bury them separately. In such a case, it is permissible to bury more than one body in a grave. This is based on a hadith reported by Ahmad and Tirmidhi, who said, "The Ansar came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, on the day of the Battle of Uhud, saying: 'O Allah's Messenger! We are afflicted with physical injury and we are tired, what do you command us to do?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Dig it, enlarge it, and deepen it, then place two or three men in one grave.' They asked: 'Whom should we put in first?' He said: 'The one who knows the most Qur'an'." Tirmidhi stated that it is a sound hadith. 'Abd-ur Razzaq reported from Wathilah ibn al-Asqa' with a sound chain of narrators that, "a man and a woman were buried together in the same grave. The man would be placed first, and then the woman behind

him."

Burial at Sea

The author of *al-Mughni* said: "If a person died while in a ship on the sea, then, according to Ahmad, they should wait a day or two to find a place to bury him, unless they are afraid that the corpse would decay. If they cannot find a place (on land) to bury him, then the deceased should be washed, shrouded, a funeral prayer offered for him, then tied with a heavy weight, it be thrown into the water." This is the opinion of 'Ata and Al-Hasan. Al-Hasan said, "He is to be put in a basket and then thrown into the sea." Ash-Shafi'i said: "The body should be placed on two boards and let into the sea so that the boards might take it ashore, where some people might find it and bury it. But if one throws it into the sea, one would not be committing any sin."

The later, i.e. burial at sea, is preferable, because it serves the purpose of covering the body which is comparable to burying him. Tying it between two boards is apt to expose it and cause it to be disfigured and mutilated. It might be thrown on the shore, mutilated and naked, or it might fall into the hands of pagans. That is why we believe the second course mentioned above is to be preferred.

Placing Branches of Palm on a Grave

It is not lawful to put a branch of a palm or flowers on a grave. The contrary is suggested by the following hadith reported by Bukhari and others from Ibn 'Abbas: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, passed by two graves and said, 'Those two are being punished for a minor matter. The first did not clean himself carefully after urinating. The second one used to spread lies.' Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked for a fresh branch of a palm tree, broke it into two parts, and then placed a part on each of them, saying, 'I hope that this will reduce their punishment for as long as the branch remains fresh.' Al-Khattabi is of the opinion, however, that "This placing of a branch of a palm on the graves, while saying, "I hope that this will reduce their punishment for as long as it remains fresh," is a blessed effect of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and of his supplication to Allah to lighten their punishment."According to Al-Khattabi, "He hoped, as it were, that the two would be relieved of their punishment so long as the palm branch remained fresh. This, however, does not have anything to do with the freshness or dryness of the palm branch or its role in lightening the punishment as such. Though the masses in many of the Muslim countries place branches of palm over the graves of their relatives, this practice has no basis or merit in the light of Islamic teachings."

Al-Khattabi's opinion as reported above is correct. The Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, were familiar with this and practiced it. Bukhari reported that, "There is no evidence to show that anyone of them ever put a branch of a palm or a bunch of flowers on graves, except on the grave of Buraidah al-Asalmi, who had instructed his heirs in his will that two

branches of palm be placed on his grave."[122] The idea that such a practice was lawful, and yet was unknown to all the Companions, except Buraidah, is not plausible. Al-Hafiz said in *Al-Fath*: "Apparently Buraidah took the hadith in its general import and did not regard it as specifically related to those two men." Ibn Rashid said: "It is apparent from Bukhari's commentary that it was specifically done by the Prophet, peace be upon him, for those two men. He also quoted a statement of Ibn 'Umar, who, when he noticed a tent was set up over 'Abd ur Rahman's grave, said: 'Take it away; the only thing that can shade him is his deeds'." Ibn Umar's statement shows that he realized that placing anything over a grave does not benefit the deceased, except his own good deeds.

A Woman who Dies While Pregnant with a Living Fetus

If a pregnant woman dies and the trustworthy physicians are sure that the fetus is alive, then it must be taken out of her womb by a caesarian operation.

A non-Muslim Woman who Dies while Carrying a Child by a Muslim is to be Buried in a Separate Grave

Al-Baihaqi reported from Wathilah bin al-Asqa' that he buried a Christian woman bearing the child of a Muslim in a cemetery that belonged to neither Muslims nor Christians. Ahmad supports this opinion because he says that the woman being a disbeliever, cannot be buried in a cemetery of Muslims, for they would suffer because of her punishment, nor can she be buried in a Christian cemetery because her fetus, which is a Muslim, would suffer by their punishment.

The Preference of being Buried in Cemeteries

Ibn Qudamah said: "A burial in a cemetery is better for a servant of Allah than being buried in home, for this is less harmful to survivors in his family, is more like the dwellings of the hereafter, and is more suitable a place for making supplications for forgiveness and mercy for the dead. The Companions, their Successors, and those after them buried their dead in the deserts in cemeteries.

Some people may ask: "Why then were the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his two Companions buried in his home?" In answer to this we would refer to the statement of 'Aishah in which she said: "This was done lest the grave of the Prophet be turned into a mosque."[123] The Prophet, peace be upon him, buried his Companions in the cemetery of "al-Baqi' in Madinah and surely his action is more preferable than someone else's action. The Companions of the

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[122] Bukhari.

[123] Bukhari.

Prophet regarded his burial arrangements as a special case for him because, as reported in a tradition "the Prophets are buried at the place they die," and because burying him at his home distinguished his grave from those of others, and protected it from being exposed to great numbers of people, he was buried at home.

When asked about a man who had instructed in his will that he be buried in his house, Ahmad said: "He should be buried with Muslims in their cemetery."

The Prohibition Against Talking Ill of the Dead

It is not permissible to talk ill of the deceased Muslims or to mention their evil deeds. This is based on Bukhari's report from 'Aishah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Do not speak ill of the dead; they have seen the result of (the deeds) that they forwarded before them."Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi have transmitted, but with a weak chain of narrators, from Ibn 'Umar a similar hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Mention the good deeds of your dead and cover their evil deeds." As for those Muslims who openly do evil or indulge in illicit innovation, it is permissible to mention their evil deeds if some public good so requires and and as a warning to others in order to discourage anyone who might otherwise follow their bad example. If no such benefit is to be gained, then it is not permissible to mention anything evil about the deceased. Bukhari and Muslim reported that Anas said: "A funeral procession passed by and the people praised the deceased. The Prophet, peace be upon him, exclaimed, 'It is decided.' Then another funeral procession passed by and the people said some bad things about the deceased. The Prophet, peace be upon him, remarked, 'It is decided.' 'Umar asked: 'What is decided?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, answered, 'The one whom you praised is entitled to Paradise, and the one whom you described as bad is entitled to the Hell Fire. You are Allah's witnesses on earth'."

Cursing the dead disbelievers is permissible, because Allah, the Exalted, says: "Curses by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary, were pronounced on those among the Children of Israel who rejected faith."[124] Similarly we read in the Qur'an: "Perish the hands of the Father of Flame!"[125] Pharaoh and others like him have also been cursed in the Qur'an, besides the great curse of Allah about which we read: "Behold! the curse of Allah is on those who do wrong."[126]

Reciting the Qur'an by the Graveside

The jurists differ concerning the legality of reciting the Qur'an by the

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[124] Qur'an 5:78

[125] Qur'an 111:1

[126] Qur'an 11:18

graveside. Ash-Shafi'i and Muhammad bin Al-Hasan consider it desirable, because by it, the deceased might be blessed. Al-Qadi 'Iyad and scholars of the Maliki school agree with them on this point. Ahmad holds that there is nothing wrong in reciting the Qur'an at a grave, whereas Malik and Abu Hanifah view this as not desirable because the sunnah does not mention this practice.

Building New Graves Over Old Graves

Muslim scholars agree that a place where a Muslim is buried should not be disturbed if flesh, bones, or other parts of the body remain there. If any of his other remains are found it is not permissible to disturb them. But if the entire corpse has disintegrated into dust, then a new grave may be dug there. Also, in such a case it is permissible to use the land for planting, cultivation, building, and for other beneficial purposes. If the remains of a body, such as bones, are found during the digging, then the digging should be stopped. And if the remains are found after the digging is finished, then it is quite permissible to place these to one side in the grave and bury another body beside them.

If the deceased person was buried before a funeral prayer was offered for him or her and the person had not yet been covered with soil, then the remains should be removed and the funeral prayer should be offered before reburial. But if the deceased was buried completely without a funeral prayer, it is unlawful, according to the Hanafi and the Shafi'i schools, to dig up the grave. This is also the opinion of Ahmad, according to one narration from him. In such a case, a funeral prayer should be offered for the deceased without disturbing the grave. Yet another report from Ahmad says that in such a case the grave should be dug up, the body exhumed, and a funeral prayer offered for the deceased person.

The leaders of the three schools hold it permissible to dig up a grave for a valid reason, e.g., to remove some money left in the grave, to turn the face of a body toward the *Ka'bah* if buried otherwise, to wash a body that was buried without a proper purification, and to improve the shroud. This is not done, however, in cases when it is feared that by doing so the corpse will disintegrate.

The Hanafi school disagrees and considers it not permissible to dig up a grave for any of the above reasons. They consider such digging of a grave as a sort of dismembering of the body, which is not permissible in any case. Ibn Qudamah countered this position by explaining: "It would be considered dismemberment (*muthlah*) only in the case of those whose bodies have rotten away. In such a case, a grave should not be dug up. If the deceased was buried without a shroud, then there are two alternatives. First, he should be left alone since the object of having a shroud is to cover the body, and that is achieved by covering it with soil. Second, the grave should be dug up and the body shrouded, because shrouding is obligatory and is as important as washing the body."

Ahmad said: "If the grave digger forgot and left his tools inside the grave, he may dig them up." The same applies if someone dropped an axe, some

money, or something of value. He was asked: "What if the deceased's family offered the owner of the objects compensation for his lost valuables?"He said: "If they give him his rightful due, then he may not dig."

Bukhari has reported a relevant hadith concerning this from Jabir, who said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, came to Abdallah ibn Ubayy after he was lowered in his grave. He commanded his companions to take him out. Then he put him on his knees, blew his saliva over him, then put a shirt on him." He has also reported: "A man was buried with my father. I did not feel good until I removed him and buried him in a separate grave."[127]

Bukhari has given these two ahadith in a separate chapter, entitled: "Can a deceased be taken out of the grave for any reason?" Abu Daw'ud reported from Abdallah ibn 'Amr who said, "While we were going to al-Taif and passing by a grave, I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying: 'This is Abu Raghal's grave.' He used to treat the Prophet insolently in the sacred precincts (of the Sacred Mosque). The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, 'When he left, a retribution overtook Abu Raghal, as it did his people at this place, so he was buried here. And the proof of this is that he was buried with a piece of gold. So if you dig up his grave, you will get it.' The People rushed to the grave, dug it up, found, and removed the gold piece."

Al-Khattabi said: "This shows that it is permissible to dig up the graves of polytheists if there is some good or benefit for Muslims in doing so. Indeed, in such a situation their case is not similar to that of deceased Muslims."

Transfering the Body from One Place to Another

The Ash-Shafi'i school considers it unlawful to transfer the body of a deceased from one country or town to another unless it is to Makkah, Madinah or Jerusalem. It is permissible to remove the body to one of these cities because of their special significance and position.If someone leaves instructions in his or her will that he or she be buried in a place other than these three cities, the will may not be executed, because it could delay the burial and cause the body to deteriorate. Likewise transferring the body from one grave to another is prohibited unless there is a valid reason for doing so, for example, if the deceased was buried without a proper wash, or was buried without turning the deceased's face toward the *qiblah*, or the grave was damaged by flood or dampness.

It is stated in *Al-Minhaj* that digging up a grave after burial either for removing the body or for any other reason is prohibited unless there is genuine reason for it, such as when a deceased person is buried without a wash or is buried in a usurped cloth or land or something of value is left in the grave or the deceased was buried without facing the *qiblah*.

The Maliki school holds it permissible to remove the body from one place to another before or after the burial, for a genuine reason, for example, when

[127] The body was taken out six months after his father's death.

it is feared that the body of a deceased may be drowned in the sea or eaten up by wild animals, or when relatives want to bury the deceased nearby so that they may visit it more easily, or in order to seek the blessings of the place to which the body is removed. In all such cases, transferring of the body from one place to another is permissible provided its sanctity is not affected, e.g., it does not bloat, does not decompose or its bones do not break.

The Hanafi school considers the removal of a body from one place to another undesirable, and holds it preferable to bury a person at the place of death. The body may be taken for a mile or two for burial, for that is the usual distance to a cemetery. After the burial removing the body without a genuine reason is not permissible as mentioned above. If a woman's son dies and he is buried in her absence in another town, and she was impatient and wanted to remove his body to her own town, her request may not be heeded.

The Hanbali school considers it desirable to bury a martyr at the place where he or she is killed. Ahmad said, "As to those who are slain, a hadith reported by Jabir from the Prophet, peace be upon him, says: 'Bury the martyrs wherever they are killed'." Ibn Majah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, ordered that the martyrs of the Battle of Uhud be returned and buried at the places where they had fallen." As for the others, they are not to be removed from one town to another without a valid cause. This is the opinion of Al-Awza'i and Ibn al-Mundhir. Abdallah ibn Malikah said: "Abd-ur Rahman ibn Abu Bakr died in Abyssinia and his body was carried to Makkah where he was buried. When 'Aishah visited his grave she said: 'By Allah! Had I been there when you died, I would not have allowed you to be buried anywhere except at the place where you had died. And had I seen you there, I would not have visited you'." Burying the deceased at the place of death is easier and more secure against deterioration of the physical remains. It is permissible, however, to remove the body from one place to another in case there is a valid reason.

Ahmad said: "I do not know of any harm in transferring the deceased from one town to another." When Az-Zuhri was asked about that, he said, "The bodies of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Sa'id ibn Zaid were removed from al-'Aqiq to Madinah."

Condolences

Offering one's condolences to someone means sharing in his grief and encouraging him to be patient. It means enjoining patience to comfort the distressed person and to lighten his or her grief and misfortune.

Their Legality

Condolences are desirable, even if the deceased was a non-Muslim. Ibn Majah and Al-Baihaqi reported from 'Amr ibn Hazm that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Every believer who consoles his brother in distress, will be dressed by Allah in an apparel of honor on the Day of Resurrection." It is recommended, however, that the condolences be offered only once.

The condolences should be offered to the entire family of the deceased, that is, to all the relatives, old and young, men and women.[128] One may offer condolences either before or after the burial up to three days after death. If the person either offering or receiving condolences was not present at the time of death, condolences may be offered even at a later period.

The Wording of Condolence

Condolences may be offered in any words so long as they lighten the distress, induce patience, and bring solace to the bereaved. It is preferable, however, to use the wording as transmitted in ahadith.

Usamah ibn Zaid reported, "A daughter of the Prophet, peace be upon him, sent him a message to come to her house, because a son of hers had died. In response he sent her a message with his regards saying:

«إن لله ما أخذ ، وله ما أعطى ، وكل شيء عنده بأجل مسمى ، فلتصبر ، ولتحتسب»

'Verily, to Allah belongs what He has taken, and to Him belongs what He has given. For everything He has set a term. So be patient and be content'."[129]

At-Tabarani, Al-Hakim, and Ibn Mardawayh reported - with a chain that has an unreliable narrator - from Mu'adh ibn Jabal that when a son of his died, Mu'adh received a letter from the Prophet, peace be upon him, offering him condolences. The Prophet wrote to him: "In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Mu'adh bin Jabal. Peace be upon you. I praise Allah, there is no god but He. May Allah increase your reward, grant you patience, and give us and you the

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[128] The scholars exclude from this list beautiful young women. Only their *mahram* relatives may offer condolences to them.

[129] Bukhari. In Comment An-Nawawi said: "This is a very comprehensive hadith. It contains a number of essential principles of Islam. It encourages one to be patient in the face of catastrophe and hard times. The meaning of 'what Allah takes' is that everything belongs to Allah. Therefore what he takes also belongs to Him and not to others. He takes what He owns. Whatever we have is on trust. Thus, we should be patient and content with whatever befalls us."

power to offer our thanks, for verily, our lives, our wealth, and our families are gifts of Allah entrusted to us only for awhile. May Allah grant you joy and bless you with a large reward, mercy, and guidance. If you are content with Him, you should be patient. Do not let your grief destroy your reward, so that you may regret it later on. Remember grieving over the deceased will not restore him to life, nor remove grief. Whatever is destined to happen, it is as if it has already occurred. Peace be on you'."[130]

Ash-Shafi'i has reported the following in his *Musnad* from Ja'far ibn Muhammad, who reported from his father and from his grandfather, both of whom said: "When the Prophet, peace be upon him, died and condolences were offered, they heard someone saying, 'In Allah is the best consolation against every catastrophe, a substitute for every loss, and a replacement for anything that is missed. Trust Allah, seek His aid, and be hopeful of His mercy.The one really afflicted is the one who is deprived of the reward for his misfortune." The chain of narrators of this hadith is weak. Muslim scholars say that if a Muslim offers condolences to another Muslim he should say:

«أعظم الله أجرك وأحسن عزاءك وغفر لميتك»

"May Allah increase your reward, give you the best consolation, and forgive your deceased beloved."

And if one gives condolences to a Muslim for a disbelieving relative, one should say:

«أعظم الله أجرك وأحسن عزاءك»

"May Allah increase your reward, and grant you the best of consolation."

If one gives condolences to a disbeliever for a Muslim relative, one should say:

«أحسن الله عزاءك وغفر لميتك»

"May Allah give you the best of condolences and grant forgiveness to your deceased beloved."

If both the deceased and the one to whom condolences are given are disbelievers, then one should say:

«أخلف الله عليك»

"May Allah grant you a substitute."

As for the response to condolences, the receiver should respond,

«آمين ، أجرك الله»

"*Amin*" and "May Allah reward you."

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[130] This hadith is weak. Mu'adh's son reportedly died two years after the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him.

According to Ahmad, one may or may not shake hands with the bereaved when offering condolences. If one sees a person who has torn his or her clothes because of a misfortune, one should comfort the person, and should not refuse to do what is good because of his or her vain act, but it is good if one bids such a person to refrain from doing so.

Sitting for Condolences

The sunnah concerning this is that one should offer condolences to the bereaved family and leave. Neither the consoler nor the consoled should sit down. This is the lesson we learn from the example of our righteous predecessors. Ash-Shafi'i in his *Al-Umm* said, "I dislike gathering in groups together to give condolences even if those gathered do not cry. Such a gathering revives sorrow and adds to the grief and burden of the bereaved family. An-Nawawi said, "Ash-Shafi'i and his companions disliked sitting for condolences, whereby members of the family stay in their homes to receive anyone coming to give their condolences. Instead, they should go about their usual tasks and needs. This applies both to men and women. Al-Muhamili states this explicitly and transmits it in reference to a text from Ash-Shafi'i. This is *makruh tanzihi*[131] unless it is coupled with some other innovation. If it is accompanied with another forbidden innovation (*bid'ah*), as is generally the case, then it is regarded as one of the strongly forbidden acts. All such acts are an innovation, and as a sound hadith says, "All novel acts are an innovation and every innovation is error."

Ahmad and many other Hanafi scholars also hold this opinion. Early Hanafi scholars, however, held the view that there is nothing wrong in holding a gathering at places other than mosques for three days of condolence, so long as one does nothing prohibited. The practices of some people nowadays, such as gathering for condolences, setting up tents, spreading carpets, and incurring a lot of expenses out of arrogance and show off are all despicable innovations that are forbidden and must be avoided, especially when most of these acts are contradictory to the teachings of the Qur'an and sunnah and are vestiges of pre-Islamic customs of *jahiliyyah*. Some of these innovations are reciting the Qur'an in a melodic fashion and disregarding the rules of proper recitation, or not keeping silent when listening to the Qur'an or indulging in smoking or such other activities. And this is not all. Some of these slaves of their desires indulge in extreme innovation. They are not satisfied with the days originally prescribed by Islam, but designate Wednesday as the day to renew these abominations and to indulge in these innovations. They celebrate the anniversary of death on the first day and observe remembrance on the second day, and do other such other things without any justification by either text or reason.

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[131] *Makruh tanzihi* signifies something which is undesirable yet is closer to the lawful.

Visiting Graves

Visiting graves is desirable for men. 'Abdallah ibn Buraidah reported from his father that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "I had forbidden you to visit graves, but now you may visit them. It will remind you of the Hereafter."[132] They were prohibited from visiting the graves because of their proximity to the *jahiliyyah* (Days of Ignorance) when they used incorrect and obscene language. After they had fully entered the fold of Islam, became well pleased with it, and had fully accepted its laws, the Prophet, peace be upon him, permitted them to visit graves.

Abu Hurairah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, visited his mother's grave and cried, and everyone there cried with him. Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'I sought my Lord's permission to seek forgiveness for her, but He did not permit me. I then sought permission to visit her grave and He permitted me to do this. You should visit graves, because they will remind you of the reality of death."[133]

Since the purpose of visiting graves is admonition and remembrance of death, it is permissible to visit the graves of disbelievers. Weeping when passing by the graves of the wrongdoers who were seized and punished by Allah for their evil deeds, and to express one's humility and one's need for forgiveness of Allah is desirable.This is obvious from a hadith, reported by Bukhari on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said to his Companions, when they passed through Al-Hijr, the dwellings of the people of Thamud, "Do not go without weeping to the places of burial of those who are undergoing torment. But if you cannot weep, then do not enter these places lest what befell them should befall you."

Etiquette of Visiting Graves

Whoever pays a visit to a grave should face the deceased, greet him, and supplicate for him. On this subject we find the following:

Buraidah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, taught us that when we visited graves we should say, 'Peace be upon you, O believing men and women, O dwellers of this place. Certainly, Allah willing, we will join you. You have preceded us and we are to follow you.We supplicate to Allah to grant us and you security'."[134]

Ibn 'Abbas reported: "Once the Prophet, peace be upon him, passed by graves in Madinah. He turned his face toward them saying: 'Peace be upon you, O dwellers of these graves. May Allah forgive us and you. You have preceded us, and we are following your trail'." [135]

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[132] Muslim, Ahmad, and the *Sunan* works.

[133] Muslim, Ahmad, and the Sunan, except Tirmidhi.

[134] Reported by Muslim, Ahmad, and others.

[135] Tirmidhi

'Aishah said: "Every time it was my turn to be with the Prophet, peace be upon him, toward the end of the night, he would go out to the cemetery of al-Baqi' and would say,

«السلام عليكم دار قوم مؤمنين وأتاكم ما
توعدون غداً مؤجلون وإنا إن شاء الله بكم
لاحقون اللهم اغفر لأهل بقيع الغرقد»

'Peace be upon you, O abode of believers. What you were promised will come to pass tomorrow at a fixed time. We shall, Allah willing, soon join you. O Allah! Grant forgiveness to the people who are buried in al-Baqi' al-Gharqad'."[136]

'Aishah also reported: "I asked: 'What should I say when I pass by a graveyard, O Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'Say,

«السلام على أهل الديار من المؤمنين
والمسلمين ويرحم الله المستقدمين منا
والمستأخرين وإنا إن شاء الله بكم لاحقون»

"Peace be upon the believing men and women dwelling here. May Allah grant mercy to those who have preceded us and those who are to follow them. Certainly, Allah willing, we will join you"'."

What some people do, like wiping hands over the graves and tombs, kissing them, and circumambulating around them are abominable innovations. Such things should not be done, for they are unlawful. These things are permissible, however, if performed in relation with the House of Allah, the Ka'abah, for Allah has so honored it. The grave of the Prophet, peace be upon him, cannot be considered a similar case, nor the tomb of a saint. All good comes from adherence to his example whereas all evil flows from innovating new things in religion.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, visited the graves to supplicate for their inhabitants, and to seek mercy and forgiveness of Allah for them. Contrary to this, the pagans supplicated to the dead, swearing by them, asking them for their needs, and seeking their support and help. Such pagan practices are in conflict with the guidance of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his teachings about the Oneness of Allah and about the manner of supplicating for Allah's mercy for the dead. The people who do such things are guilty of polytheism; they are indulging in sin, and bringing evil to the deceased.They may be divided into three categories: those who supplicate for the deceased, those who supplicate through the deceased, and the third who supplicate to the deceased. They think that making supplications by a grave is better than in a mosque. For anyone who looks to the guidance of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and his Companions, the distinction between the

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[136] Muslim

two cited positions is fairly obvious."

Can Women Visit Graves

Imam Malik and some Hanafi scholars, and, according to one report from Ahmad, most of the scholars hold it permissible for women to visit graves. This is based on the following hadith from 'Aishah, "What should I say to them, O Messenger of Allah when visiting graves?" As mentioned above Abdallah ibn Abi Mulaikah is also reported to have said, "Once 'Aishah returned after visiting the graveyard. I asked, 'O Mother of the Believers, where have you been?' She said: 'I went out to visit the grave of my brother Abd ar-Rahman.' I asked her: 'Didn't the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, prohibit visiting graves?' She said, 'Yes, he did forbid visiting graves during the early days, but later on he ordered us to visit them'." This is reported by Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi, who also remarked that this hadith was narrated only by Bistam bin Muslim al-Basri. Adh-Dhahabi said that it is a sound hadith.

Anas reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, saw a woman crying by the grave of her son, and said to her, 'Fear Allah, and be patient.' She replied, 'What do you care about my tragedy?' When he went away, someone told her, 'Indeed, that was the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him.' The woman felt extremely sorry and she immediately went to the Prophet's house, where she did not find any guards. She called out: 'O Messenger of Allah! I did not recognize you.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Verily patience is needed at the time of the first affliction'."[137] This supports the argument in favor of the permissibility of women visiting graves, for the Prophet, peace be upon him, saw her at the grave and did not show his disapproval of it.

The purpose of visiting graves is to remember the Hereafter, which is something that both men and women need. Men are by no means more in need of this reminder than women.

Some scholars disliked it for women to visit graves as they are less patient and too emotional. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "May Allah curse the women who are frequent visitors of the graves." [138]

Al-Qurtubi said: "The curse mentioned in this hadith applies only to those women who visit graves frequently. The reason for this curse lies perhaps in the fact that it involves infringement of the rights of the husband, and leads to adornment and exhibition of their beauty to strangers, and shouting, yelling, and other similar things." It may be said that, "If no such harm is feared from women visiting graves, then there is no valid reason for preventing them from visiting graves, for indeed remembrance of death is something that both men and women equally need." Commenting on Al-Qurtubi's view, Ash-Shawkani said, "This statement may form the basis for reconciling apparently contradictory ahadith."

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[137] Bukhari and Muslim.

[138] Reported by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and Tirmidhi, who said that it is a sound hadith.

The Deeds that Benefit the Departed Souls and Proffering Reward for Good Deeds to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)

There is consensus that a deceased person benefits from all good deeds for which he or she in his or her life might have been a cause. Abu Hurairah reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'When a person dies all his good deeds cease except for three: a continuous act of charity, beneficial knowledge, and a righteous son who prays for him'."[139] Also Abu Hurairah reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'The righteous works that continue to benefit a believer after his death include the knowledge that he taught and spread among others, a righteous son whom he leaves behind, or a copy of the Qur'an that he bequeaths to his inheritors, or a mosque that he builds, or a rest house that he builds for the wayfarers, or a canal of water that he digs for the benefit of others, or a charity that he gives out of his property during his life while he is sound of health. He will continue to receive reward for all these even after his death.'[140]

Jarir ibn Abdallah reported: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam will get its reward and the rewards for all those who follow these practices after him, without any loss to their reward. And whoever introduces a bad practice in Islam will acquire its sin and the sins of all those who practice it, without any decrease in their sins."

An account of the righteous deeds performed by others that continue to be beneficial to the deceased is given in detail below:

1) Asking Allah for His forgiveness. The scholars agree that it is good to do this, because Allah says in the Qur'an: "Those who came after them say, 'O Allah! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith. Do not put animosity in our hearts for those who believe. Our Lord, indeed, You are Most Merciful, Most Kind."[141] A saying of the Prophet, peace be upon him, reads, "When you offer the funeral prayer for the deceased, make supplications for this person." This has already been mentioned above. The Prophet, peace be upon him, taught us the supplication: "O Allah! Forgive our living and our dead." Generations of Muslims, both past and present, have been supplicating to Allah for His mercy and forgiveness for their dead. Such a practice has continued without any dissent or disagreement among scholars.

2) Charity. An-Nawawi has recorded that Muslim scholars agree that charity benefits the deceased person and its reward reaches the deceased whether it is given by his or own son or by someone else. This is based on a report from Ahmad, Muslim, and others from Abu Hurairah that, "A man said to the Prophet, peace be upon him, 'My father died leaving wealth but no will. Would he be pardoned if we gave charity on his behalf?' He said: 'Yes.'" It is also reported from Al-Hasan from Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah that "his mother died

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[139] Muslim, and the Sunan.

[140] Ibn Majah.

[141] Qur'an 59:10

and he said, 'O Messenger of Allah, my mother has died. Should I give charity on her behalf?' He said: 'Yes.' I said: 'What is the best charity?' He said, 'Offering people a drink of water'." Al-Hasan said: "This is the drinking place of the family of Sa'd in Madinah." This is reported by Ahmad, Nasa'i, and others.

Giving charity in the graveyard is not permissible and giving it during the funeral is disliked.

3) Fasting. This is based on a report by Bukhari and Muslim from Ibn 'Abbas who said, "A man came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, 'My mother has died without making up for a missed month of fasting. Can I fast on her behalf?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Would you pay her debt if she owed someone?' The man said, 'Yes.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Allah is more deserving of payment in settlement of His debt'."

4) Performing the Pilgrimage (*Hajj*). This is based on a report by Bukhari from Ibn 'Abbas that "a woman of the Juhainah tribe came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, 'My mother had vowed to perform pilgrimage, but she died before she could fulfill her vow. Should I do it on her behalf?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Yes. Perform Hajj on her behalf. Would you not pay the debt of your mother if she had owed someone? Fulfill it. Allah is more deserving of receiving payment for what is due to Him'."

5) Prayer (*salah*). This is based on a report by Ad-Darqutni who said that "a man asked, 'O Allah's Messenger! I had parents whom I served while they lived. How can I be good to them after their death?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Verily, among the good deeds that you can do after their death is to offer prayer (*salah*) for them when you pray for yourself and to fast for them when you fast for yourself'."

6) Recitation of the Qur'an. This is beneficial to the deceased according to the opinion of the majority of the scholars among the *ahl al-sunnah.*

An-Nawawi said, "The most well-known position of the Shafi'i school is that this does not benefit the deceased." Ahmad ibn Hanbal and a group of Shafi'i scholars hold that it does benefit the deceased. The reciter has an option. He may supplicate for the deceased to be rewarded for the recitation, saying:

«اللهم أوصل مثل ثواب ما قرأته إلى فلان»

"O Allah! Grant the reward of what I recited to so and so."

Ibn Qudamah in *al-Mughni* stated, "Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, 'The deceased will receive the reward for every good done on his behalf. This is proved by textual evidence found on this subject. The fact that Muslims in every city gather to recite the Qur'an for the benefit of the deceased and that they have been doing so without any disagreement or disapproval show that there is consensus on this subject'."

Those who hold that the deceased benefits by the recitation of others make it conditional upon the reciter not to accept any payment for his recitation. If the reciter is paid for reciting, it is unlawful for both the giver and the receiver,

and he shall have no reward for his reciting. Abd Ar Rahman ibn Shibl reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Recite the Qur'an, and do good deeds .... Do not neglect it, nor be extreme in it. Do not make it a means of living nor a source of your wealth."[142]

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "Worship is of two types: financial and physical. The Prophet, peace be upon him, has informed us that because charity (*sadaqah*) benefits the deceased, all other acts of charity will also benefit the deceased, and that because fasting on his behalf benefits the deceased, all other physical acts of worship will likewise benefit the deceased. Similarly the Prophet, peace be upon him, informed us that the reward of making Hajj, which involves both physical and financial sacrifice, does indeed benefit the deceased. Thus these three types of beneficial acts of worship are supported by both the revealed texts and reason."

Intention as a Prerequisite

The performer must have the intention of performing an act on behalf of the deceased. Ibn 'Aqil said, "If one performed any act of obedience, for example, a prayer, fasting, or recitation of the Qur'an and made its reward a gift to a deceased Muslim, the deceased will receive the reward for it, provided that he has a prior intention of making it for the benefit of the deceased, and the act and the intention go together." Ibn al-Qayyim supports this opinion.

The Best Present for the Deceased

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "The best present for the deceased is an act that is most beneficial to people, for example, freeing a slave.Thus a *sadaqah* giving in charity is better than fasting on behalf of the deceased. The best charity is that which fulfills someone's need and is continuous. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The best charity is to give people a drink of water." This applies to a place where water is scarce. Otherwise, giving someone a drink of water from a river or a canal would not be better than feeding the hungry who need food. Likewise, supplication and asking forgiveness for the deceased is beneficial to the deceased, especially when the supplicant is sincere, earnest, and humble in his supplication. Such a supplication is better than charity, just as regular prayer *(salah)* is better than the funeral prayer and than supplicating for the deceased by his grave.

In general, the best gift to send the deceased is freeing a slave, giving in charity, asking forgiveness for him or her, and making the *Hajj* (pilgrimage) on his or her behalf.

[142] Reported by Ahmad, At-Tabarani, and Al-Baihaqi.

Presenting a Reward to Allah's Messenger (pbuh)

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "Some of the latter jurists hold it desirable while others do not agree because they regard it as an innovation (*bid'ah*). The Companions never did it. The Prophet, peace be upon him, shall receive a reward for every good done by anyone from among his community (*Ummah*) without in the least diminishing the reward of the doer.This is because he is the one who invited his community to every good, and led them to it, and because the one who calls others to truth always has a reward similar to that of those who follow it without in any way diminishing their reward. Whatever guidance or knowledge his community gained, they gained it only through him, so he shall have a reward equal to that of his followers whether they formally dedicate it to him or not.

Children of Muslims and Non-Muslims

The children of Muslims who die prior to the age of puberty go to Paradise. 'Adi ibn Thabit reported that he heard al-Bara' saying, "When Ibrahim, son of the Prophet died, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Verily, he will have suckling in Paradise'."[143] Al-Hafiz said in *Al-Fath*, "Bukhari indicates his view on this subject when he makes the statement that 'they are in Paradise'." Anas ibn Malik reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If any Muslim has three children and they die prior to reaching the age of puberty, Allah will cause him to enter Paradise on account of His mercy to them."

It is clear from this hadith that those children who become a reason for others to enter Paradise, would themselves be in a far better position to enter it, because they are the real cause of the mercy of Allah.

As for children of non-Muslims, they are similar to the children of Muslims with respect to their entry into Paradise. An-Nawawi said, "This is the sound view held by the eminent scholars, and it is supported by Allah's words, 'We will not punish anyone until We have sent a Messenger.'[144] Now if an adult is not punished for the reason that the truth did not reach him, it is far more reasonable to assume that a child will not be punished."A report by Ahmad from Khansa, daughter of Mu'awiyah ibn Sarim, states that he related her aunt's following account: "I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! Who will be in Paradise?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Prophets will be in Paradise, martyrs will be in Paradise, and babies will be in Paradise'." Al-Hafiz said that this hadith has a sound chain of narrators.

The Questioning in the Grave

All *ahl al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama'ah* agree that each person will be ques-

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[143] Bukhari

[144] Qur'an 17:15

tioned after his death, whether he is buried or not. Even if a person were eaten by carnivorous animals or burnt to ashes and thrown into the air or drowned in the sea, he or she would be questioned about his or her deeds, and rewarded with good or evil depending on his or her deeds in life. Both the body and the soul together experience punishment or reward.

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "The early Muslim community and its prominent scholars held that after death, a person is either in bliss or torment both physically and spiritually. After its separation from the body, the soul endures a state of happiness or punishment. At times, when the soul rejoins the body, both of them receive torture or joy. On the Day of Resurrection, the souls will be returned to the bodies and they will rise from their graves and stand before the Lord of the worlds. The Muslims, Christians, and Jews, all believe in the resurrection of the body.

Al-Maruzi related that Imam Ahmad said, "The punishment in the grave is a reality, and only he who is misguided or wants to misguide others denies it."

Hanbal said, "I asked Abu Abdallah about the punishment in the grave. He said, 'These are the sound ahadith and we believe in them and affirm them. We affirm everything that comes from the Prophet, peace be upon him, with a sound chain of narrators. If we were to confirm a report as being from the Prophet, peace be upon him, and then reject it or oppose it, we would be denying the Word of Allah, "Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it".'[145] I asked him, 'Is the punishment of the grave a reality?' He said, 'Yes, it is a reality. The people are punished in their graves.' I heard Abu Abdallah saying, 'We believe in the punishment of the grave, in *Munkar* and *Nakir* (the two questioning angels), and that the deceased will be questioned in their graves.' The Qur'an states that 'Allah will establish in strength those who believe in the Word, that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter,'[146] that is, in the grave."

Ahmad ibn al-Qasim said, I asked, 'O Abu Abdallah! Do you believe in *Munkar* and *Nakir* and what is related concerning the punishment of the grave?' He said, 'Glory to Allah.Yes, we do confirm that and we declare so.'I said, 'This expression that you use, is it Munkar and Nakir?Or do you call them, "The two angels?"' He answered: 'Munkar and Nakir.'I said, 'They say, "There is no mention of Munkar and Nakir in the hadith".' He replied, 'Of course there is. There is Munkar and Nakir'."

Al-Hafiz said in *Al-Fath*, "Ahmad ibn Hazm and Ibn Hubairah are of the opinion that the questioning is addressed to the soul only, without its returning to the body.The majority of Muslim scholars, however, disagree with them. They say, 'The soul is returned to the body or some of it, as is confirmed by the hadith. Had the punishment been directed at the soul only, there would not be concern for the body. The scattered parts of a body should pose no problem.

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[145] Qur'an 59:7.
[146] Qur'an 14:27.

for Allah is able to give life to any part of a body, and then address the questioning to that particular part. Likewise, He is able to gather all its parts easily'."

Those who hold that the questioning will be addressed only to the soul say that if one were to examine the body in the grave at the time of the questioning, one will notice no trace of its sitting or any other movement.One will also notice that the grave is neither more narrow nor spacious. Similar is the case of those who are not buried in any grave, e.g., the people who are crucified. To counter this objection, it is maintained that it is not impossible. Rather, in physical life we find a similar example, namely, sleeping. A sleeping person experiences both pleasure and pain, but his companion cannot notice any of its effects on him. In fact, even a person who is wide awake also feels pain and pleasure when he hears or thinks of his painful or pleasant experiences, but its effects cannot be noticed. Considering the unseen in the light of what is seen or guessing about life after death in terms of the present life is the mistake of this fallacious thinking.

Obviously Allah has screened the sights and sounds of the other world from man, and with our limited physical faculties, we are incapable of perceiving the vast kingdom of heavens, unless Allah wills it.

The opinion of the majority in this respect is supported by various ahadith. The Prophet, peace be upon him, for example, told us, "the deceased hears the sound of their footsteps"; "his ribs are altered because of the embrace of the grave"; "the sound of his voice resounds when the angel strikes him with a hammer"; "he is struck between his ears," or "they (the two angels) will cause him to sit up." All these ahadith refer to various bodily conditions.

We will mention here some of the sound ahadith concerning this subject.

Zaid ibn Thabit reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, was going with us toward the dwellings of Banu an-Najjar. He was riding a pony, which spooked and he nearly fell off. He found four, five, or six graves there, and asked, 'Which of you knows about those lying in these graves?' Someone said, 'I do.' Thereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked, 'In what state did they die?' He replied, 'They died as polytheists.' He said, "These people are passing through an ordeal in the graves. You would stop burying your dead in the graves if you heard the torment in the grave that I hear. If it were not for this fact, I should have certainly made you listen to it.' Then turning his face toward us, he admonished, 'Seek refuge with Allah from the torment of Hell.' They replied, 'We seek refuge with Allah from the torment of Hell.' He said, 'Seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave.' They said, 'We seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave.' He warned, 'Seek refuge with Allah from temptations both visible and invisible.' They replied, 'We seek refuge with Allah from temptation (*fitnah*) in every visible and invisible form.' Then he added, 'Seek refuge with Allah from the temptation of the Dajjal.' They said, 'We seek refuge with Allah from the temptation of the Dajjal'."[147]

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[147] Muslim

Qatadah reported that Anas ibn Malik said, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'When a human is laid in his grave and his companions return and he hears their footsteps, two angels will come to him and make him sit and ask him, "What did you say about this man, Muhammad, may peace be upon him?" He will say, "I testify that he is Allah's servant and His Messenger." Then it will be said to him, "Look at your place in Hell-Fire. Allah has exchanged for you a place in Paradise instead of it".' The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, 'The dead person will see both his places. As for a non-believer or a hypocrite, he will respond to the angels, "I do not know, but I used to say what the people used to say!" It will be said to him, "Neither did you know nor did you seek guidance from those who had knowledge." Then he will be hit with an iron hammer between his two ears, and he will cry and that cry will be heard by all except human beings and jinns'."[148]

Al-Bara ibn 'Azib reported: The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'When a Muslim is questioned in his grave, he bears witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.' According to one report, the verse, 'Allah will establish in strength those who believe with the Word, that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter' [149] was revealed concerning the punishment of the grave. The deceased will be asked, 'Who is your Lord?' He will say, 'Allah is my Lord and Muhammad is my Prophet.' That is what is meant by the statement of Allah, 'Allah will make firm those who believe with a firm statement in this life and in the hereafter'." [150]

Ahmad and Abu Hatim reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When a deceased person is laid in his grave, he hears the sound of the footsteps of people as they go away. If he is a believer, the prayer will stand by his head, the fasting will be to his right, alms to his left, and all other good deeds of charity, kindness to relations, and good behavior will be by his feet. The deceased will be questioned by the angels at his head. The prayer will say, 'There is no entrance through me.' Then he will be questioned by his right side where fasting will say, 'There is no entrance through me.' Then he will be questioned by his left side where charity will say, 'There is no entrance through me.' Then he will be questioned by his feet where the good acts of voluntary charity, kindness to relations, and good behavior will say, 'There is no entrance through me.' Then they will say to him, 'Get up.' And he will get up. The sun will appear to him and it will begin to set. Then they will ask, 'This man who was among you, what do you say about him? What is your testimony about him?' The man will say, 'Let me pray.' The angels will say, 'You will pray. Answer our question. What do you think about this man who was among you? What do you say concerning him? What do you testify concerning him?' The deceased will say, I bear witness that Muhammad was the Messenger of Allah who brought the truth from Allah.' The deceased will be told, 'According to

[148] Bukhari and Muslim.

[149] Qur'an 14:27.

[150] Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Sunan.

this you lived, died, and according to this you will be resurrected, if Allah wills.'

"Then a door to Paradise will be opened for him. He will be told, 'This is your place in Paradise and what Allah has prepared for you.' At this the desire and happiness of the deceased will increase. His grave will be enlarged 70 arms-length and his grave will be lit up. His body will change to his original form and his spirit will be placed in a bird dangling by the trees of Paradise in a nice breeze." The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, "That is what is meant by the statement of Allah, 'Allah will establish in strength those who believe with the Word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter'." He also mentioned the unbeliever and said, "His grave will be compressed, so that his ribs will be crushed together. About this the Qur'an says, 'Verily, for him is a narrow life and We will resurrect him blind on the Day of Resurrection'."[151]

Samura ibn Jundub reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, after the prayers would turn toward us and ask us, 'Did any one of you have a dream?' If someone had, he would relate it. Upon hearing it the Prophet, peace be upon him, would say, "Whatsoever Allah wills (is done).' One day he questioned us saying, 'Did anyone of you have a dream?'They answered, 'No.' Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'But I saw tonight two men. They came to me. They held my hand and took me to the holy land. We came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, crushing it. The rock rolled away and the thrower followed it and brought it back. By the time he reached the man, his head was restored to its normal state. The thrower then did the same as he had done before. I asked my two companions, "Who are these two people?" They said, "Proceed!" So we proceeded and came to a man lying flat on his back and another man standing over his head with an iron hook. Behold, he would put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tear off that side of his face to the back of the neck and similarly tear his nose from front to back and his eye from front to back. Then he turned to the other side of the man's face and did just as he had done with the other side. As soon as he tore one side, the other side returned to its normal state. Then he returned to it to repeat what he had done before. I said to my two companions, "Who are these two people?" They said to me, "Proceed!" So we proceeded and saw a hole like an oven, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, and fire burning in it. In that oven there were naked men and women, and behold, flames of fire were reaching them from underneath, and when it reached them, they would be raised high until they were close to the mouth of the oven. Then the fire subsided and they went back inside it again. I asked, "Who are these?" They said to me, "Proceed!" And so we proceeded and came to a river of blood. And behold, in the middle of the river was a man standing, and on the bank there was one who had many stones. The man who was in the river would try to leave but the other man would throw rocks into his mouth so that he would return to

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[151] Qur'an 20:124

where he was. Every time the former tried to leave, the other would throw rocks into his mouth. Then he would return to where he was. I asked, "Who are these people?" They replied, "Proceed! Proceed!" We proceeded until we came to a man with a repulsive appearance, the most repulsive appearance you ever saw in a man! Beside him there was a fire and he was kindling it and running around it. I asked my companions, "Who is this (man)?" They said to me, "Proceed! Proceed!" So we proceeded until we reached a garden of deep green dense vegetation, bedecked with all sorts of spring colors. In the middle of the garden there was a very tall man. I could hardly see his head because of his great height. And around him there were more children than I had ever seen before. I said to my companions, "Who is this?" They replied, "Proceed! Proceed!" So we proceeded until we came to a huge majestic garden, greater and better than I have ever seen! My two companions said to me, "Go up," and I went up.'

"The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, 'So we ascended until we reached a city built of gold and silver bricks. We went to its gate and asked the gatekeeper to open the gate. It was opened and we entered the city. There we found men with one side of their bodies as handsome as the most handsome person you have ever seen, and the other side as ugly as the ugliest person you have ever seen. My two companions ordered those men to throw themselves into the river. Behold, there was a river flowing through the city, and its water was as white as milk. Those men went and threw themselves in it and then returned to us after the ugliness of their bodies had disappeared and they turned in the best shape.' I said to them, "I have seen many wonders tonight. What is the meaning of all that I have seen?"

They replied, "We will inform you. As for the first man you came upon whose head was being crushed with the rock, he is the symbol of the one who studies the Qur'an and then neither recites it nor acts on it, and sleeps, neglects the enjoined prayers. As for the man you came upon whose mouth, nostrils, and eyes were torn off from front to back, he is the symbol of the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells so many lies that it spreads all over the world. And those naked men and women whom you saw in the oven, they are the adulterers and the adulteresses, and the man whom you saw in the river of blood is the usurer. As for the man by the base of the tree, he was Abraham. As for the children around him, they are the children of the people. [152] And the man whom you saw near the fire kindling it and going round it, is Malik, the gatekeeper of Hell."'

"The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, 'My two companions explained, "The men you saw half handsome and half ugly were those persons who had mixed an act that was good with another that was bad, but Allah forgave them." The first house is the common believer's house. As for this house, it is the house of martyrs. I am Gabriel and this is Michael. Now, raise your head."

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[152] The narrator added, "Some Muslims asked the Prophet, peace be upon him, 'O Messenger of Allah! What about the children of pagans?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, 'And also the children of pagans'."

When I raised my head, I saw a palace that looked like a cloud. They said, "This is your home." I said, "Let me enter my house." They said, "You still have some life to complete on earth. Upon completing it, you may come to your home"'."[153]

Ibn al-Qayyim explained, "This is a text that pertains to the punishment of *barzakh*, for a vision by the Prophets is like revelation demonstrating the reality."

Al-Tahawi reported from Ibn Mas'ud that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "A person was ordered to be lashed a hundred times in his grave. He continuously asked Allah to decrease his punishment until only one lash remained. His grave was totally filled by fire. When the fire was removed, he regained consciousness and asked, 'Why was I lashed?' He was told, 'You offered a prayer once without proper purification, and you passed by an oppressed person but you did not help him'."

Anas reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, once heard a voice from a grave. He asked, 'When did this one die?' They said, 'He died during the pre-Islamic era.' He was pleased to hear that and remarked, 'Had I not feared that you would stop burying your dead, I would have asked Allah to let you hear the punishment of the grave'." [154]

'Abdallah ibn 'Umar reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'This is (Sa'd ibn Mu'adh), for whom the Throne (of Allah) moved. The doors of Heaven were opened for him and seventy thousand angels participated (in his funeral prayer). (His grave) was compressed and later on was expanded for him'."[155]

The Abode of Souls

Ibn al-Qayyim dealt with this subject under a separate chapter in which he mentions opinions of various scholars concerning the abode of souls. Mentioning the most correct position he explained, "It is said that the abodes of the souls in *barzakh* vary considerably. Some of them are in the highest reaches of the heavens, such as the souls of the Prophets, peace be upon them all. Their status also varies as observed by the Prophet, peace be upon him, during the night of *Isra*."

Some souls are in the form of green birds who roam around freely in Paradise. These are the souls of some of the martyrs, but not all of them. The souls of some martyrs are prevented from entering Paradise on account of their debts or some other similar thing. This is supported by a report by Ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad* from Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Jahsh that "A man came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and asked, 'O Allah's Prophet! What would I have if I am killed in the cause of Allah?' The Prophet, peace be upon him,

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153 Al-Bukhari

154 Reported by Nasa'i and Muslim.

155 Nasa'i.

replied, 'Paradise.' But, when the man got up to go, the Prophet added, 'Unless you have some debts to pay. Gabriel has informed me about it just now'."

Some souls will be locked out at the gate of Paradise, in accordance with this hadith: "I have seen your companion locked out at the gate of Paradise." Other souls are restricted to their graves as is evident from the hadith about the martyr who had stolen a cloak [156] when he was killed, the people asked, "Will he have bliss in Paradise?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "By Him in whose hand is my soul, the cloak which he stole causes a fire to flare over him in his grave."

The abode of others is at the gate of Paradise, as described in a hadith by Ibn 'Abbas that, "The abode of martyrs is in a green dome, on a bright river, near the gate of Paradise. Their provision comes from Paradise in the morning and in the evening."[157] This does not apply to Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, whose hands were transformed into wings, and with these he flies wherever he wishes in Paradise.

Others remain confined to earth, for these souls cannot rise to heaven. Indeed, these are base, earthly souls which do not mix with the heavenly souls, just as they do not mix with them during their sojourn on earth. A soul that is oblivious to its Lord, blind to His love, negligent of His remembrance, and remiss in seeking His pleasure is a despicable earthly soul.After separation from its body, it cannot go anywhere, but remains here.On the other hand, the heavenly soul in this life clings to the love of Allah and to His remembrance, and seeks His pleasure and nearness. After separation from its body, it will join other kindred heavenly souls. In the *barzakh* [158] and on the Day of Resurrection a person will be with those he loved. Allah will join some souls with others in the abode of *barzakh* and on the Day of Resurrection, placing the believer's soul with other pure souls, that is, other pure souls kindred to his soul. A soul, after separation from the body, joins other kindred souls who in their nature and deeds are similar to it and stays with them.

Some souls would be thrown in an oven or a pit along with other fornicators and harlots. Other souls would be in a river of blood, floating therein and swallowing rocks.The two categories of souls - the blessed and the damned - do not share a similar abode, for there are souls that reside in the highest reaches of heavens, while the others, low and mean earthly souls, cannot rise above the earth.

When one ponders the ahadith and traditions on this subject carefully, one can easily find the reason for this. There is no contradiction in the sound traditions on this subject. In fact, they are all true and each supports the other. It is important, however, to understand the soul and to appreciate its essence and the laws that govern its functions. Indeed, the soul is something completely different from the body. It is in Paradise, but at the same time is attached to the

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156 He had stolen it out of the spoils of war before their proper distribution.

157 Ahmad.

158 Literally an interval, a separation or a partition, *Al-barzakh* may be defined as the intervening state between death and the Last Day.

grave and the body in it. It is the swiftest thing in moving, relocating, ascending, or descending from one place to another.These souls are divided into various categories: the ones that are free to move about, those that are confined, the ones that are celestial, and the others that are earthly and of a low order. After separation from their bodies, souls do experience health and sickness, and they feel far more pleasure and pain than they experienced when they were joined together.They are subject to confinement, pain, punishment, sickness, and grief as they are to various states of joy, rest, bliss, and freedom. How similar is its condition in the body to when it was in the womb of its mother! And likewise how analogous is its situation after separation from the body to when it came out of the womb into this world! There are four abodes of the soul, and each abode is bigger and greater than the previous one.

The soul's first abode is the womb of the mother, where there is confinement, compression, seclusion, and three layers of darkness.The second abode is its earthly habitat where it grows, does good and evil, and accumulates blessings for its ultimate success or failure. Its third abode is the abode of *barzakh*, which is more spacious and immense than the abode of this world. This abode, compared to the fourth one, is like this [third] abode compared to the first abode.

The fourth abode is the abode of eternity, either Paradise or Hell. There is no other abode after these.Allah causes the soul to pass through these abodes in stages, until it reaches the abode most suitable for it, an abode that only it deserves and for which it is [uniquely] suitable, because this abode was created for it, and the soul was given the ability to perform the deeds that lead precisely to this abode.

In each abode the soul enjoys a peculiar status and position altogether different from what it has in other abodes. Blessed indeed is soul's Originator and Creator, Who gives it life, causes it to die, makes it happy or subjects it grief and sorrow. Blessed is He Who appointed for it various levels of success and failure, and distinguished them by various grades in accordance with their knowledge, performance, faculties, and morality.Whoever truly understands and appreciates this cannot, but bear witness to the fact that there is no deity except Allah, Who has no partners. With Him alone rests all authority, praise, and all that is good, and to Him alone all affairs return for decision. His is the absolute authority, and all dominion, might, honor, wisdom, and perfection free of any defects or imperfections. He is known through the testimony of His truthful Prophets and Messengers. They did indeed come with Truth. Reason testifies to its truthfulness, and nature supports and confirms it. And anything that contradicts this testimony is untrue.

Chapter Six

ADH-DHIKR

All words of praise and glory to Allah, extolling His Perfect Attributes of Power and Majesty, Beauty and Sublimeness, whether one utters them by tongue or says them silently in one's heart, are known as *dhikr* or remembrance of Allah. He has commanded us to remember Him always and ever. The Qur'an says:

> O you who believe! Celebrate the praises of Allah, and do so often; and glorify Him morning and evening.[159]

If anyone remembers Allah, He remembers that person: "Remember me, I shall remember you."[160] In a hadith *qudsi*, the Prophet, peace be upon him, narrated: "Allah says: 'I am to my servant as he expects of Me, I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his heart, I remember him to Myself, and if he remembers me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly better than his, and if he draws nearer to Me a hand's span, I draw nearer to him an arm's length, and if he draws nearer to Me an arm's length, I draw nearer to him a fathom length, and if he comes to me walking, I rush to him at [great] speed.[161]

Allah has bestowed a special distinction upon those who remember Him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The devotees have surpassed all." They asked, "Who are these exceptional people (*Mufarridun*), O Prophet of Allah?" He replied, "Those men and women who remember Allah unceasingly."[162] These are the people who are really alive. Abu Musa reported, "The likeness of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember Him is like that of a living to a dead person."[163]

Remembrance of Allah is the foundation of good deeds. Whoever succeeds in it is blessed with the close friendship of Allah. That is why the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to make remembrance of Allah at all times. When a

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159 Qur'an 33:41-41
160 Qur'an 2:152
161 Bukhari and Muslim.
162 Muslim.
163 Bukhari.

man complained, "The laws of Islam are too heavy for me, so tell me something that I can easily follow," the Prophet, peace be upon him, told him, "Let your tongue be always busy with the remembrance of Allah." The Prophet, peace be upon him, would often tell his Companions, "Shall I tell you about the best of deeds, the most pure in the sight of your Lord, about the one that is of the highest order and is far better for you than spending gold and silver, even better for you than meeting your enemies in the battlefield where you strike at their necks and they at yours?" The Companions replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Remembrance of Allah."[164]

Remembrance of Allah is also a means of deliverance from Hell Fire. Mu'adh reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'No other act of man is a more effective means for his deliverance from the chastisement of Allah than the remembrance of Allah."[165] Ahmad reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whatever you say in celebration of Allah's Glory, Majesty, and Oneness, and all your words of Praise for Him gather around the Throne of Allah. These words resound like the buzzing of bees, and call attention to the person who uttered them to Allah. Don't you wish to have someone there in the presence of Allah who would call attention to you?"

How Much *dhikr* is Required?

Allah, the Exalted, ordered that He should be remembered a lot. Describing the wise men and women who ponder His signs, the Qur'an mentions, "those who remember Allah standing, sitting and on their sides,"[166] and "those men and women who engage much in Allah's praise. For them has Allah prepared forgiveness and a great reward."[167] Mujahid explained, "A person cannot be one of 'those men and women who remember Allah much' as mentioned in the above verse of the Qur'an, unless he or she remembers Allah at all times, standing, sitting, or lying in bed."

When asked how much *dhikr* one should do to be considered as one of "those who remember Allah much," Ibn Al-Salah said that "much" is "when one is constant in supplicating, in the morning and evening and in other parts of the day and the night as reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him." Concerning the above Quranic verses 'Ali b. Abi Talha relates that Ibn 'Abbas said, "All obligations imposed upon man by Allah are clearly marked and one is exempted from them in the presence of a genuine cause. The only exception is the obligation of *dhikr*. Allah has set no specific limits for it, and under no circumstances is one allowed to be negligent of it. We are commanded to 'remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining on your sides,' in the morning, during the day, at sea or on land, on journey or at home, in poverty and in

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[164] Reported by Tirmidhi, Ahmad, and Al-Hakim, who considers its chain of narrators sound.
[165] Ahmad.
[166] Qur'an 3:191.
[167] Qur'an 33:35.

prosperity, in sickness or in health, openly and secretly, and, in fact, at all times throughout one's life and in all circumstances."

Dhikr as an Integral Part of Worship

Sa'id b. Jubair said, "Anyone engaged in obeying Allah is in fact engaged in the remembrance of Allah." Some of the earlier scholars tied it to some more specified form. 'Ata said, "The gatherings of *dhikr* are the gatherings where the lawful and the prohibited things are discussed, for instance, selling, buying, prayers, fasting, marriage, divorce, and pilgrimage." Al-Qurtubi said, "Gatherings of *dhikr* are the gatherings for knowledge and admonition, those in which the Word of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger, accounts of our righteous predecessors, and sayings of the righteous scholars are learned and practiced without any addition or innovation, and without any ulterior motives or greed."

Etiquette of *Dhikr*

The purpose of *dhikr* is to purify hearts and souls and awaken the human conscience. The Qur'an says, "And establish regular prayer, for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds, and remembrance of Allah is the greatest thing in life, without doubt."[168] In other words, the remembrance of Allah has a greater impact in restraining one from shameful and unjust deeds than just the formal regular prayer. This is so because when a servant opens up his soul to his Lord, extolling His praise, Allah strengthens him with His light, increasing thereby his faith and conviction, and reassuring his mind and heart. This refers to "those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah, for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction."[169]

And when hearts are satisfied with the Truth, they turn to the highest ideals without being deflected by impulses of desire or lust. This underscores the importance of *dhikr* in man's life. Obviously it would be unreasonable to expect these results just by uttering certain words, for words of the tongue unsupported by a willing heart are of no consequence. Allah Himself has taught us the manner in which a person should remember Him, saying, "And do bring your Lord to remembrance in your very soul, with humility and in reverence, without loudness in words, in the mornings and evening, and be not of those who are unheedful."[170]

This verse indicates that doing *dhikr* in silence and without raising one's voice is better. Once during a journey the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard a group of Muslims supplicating aloud. Thereupon the Prophet, peace be upon

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[168] Qur'an 29:45.
[169] Qur'an 13:28.
[170] Qur'an 7:205.

him, said, "Give yourselves a respite, you are not calling upon someone deaf or absent. Surely He Whom you are calling upon is near you and He listens to all. He is nearer to you than the neck of your mount." This hadith underlines the love and awe a person should feel while engaged in *dhikr*.

A part of this etiquette is the requirement that a person wishing to do *dhikr* be clean in body and dress, and smell sweet and fragrant. This will give him a fresh zeal and he will feel invigorated. One should face the *qiblah* during *dhikr*, for the best assemblies are those that face the Ka'bah.

Excellence of Assemblies of *Dhikr*

Joining the assemblies or circles of *dhikr* is a commendable practice as shown by the following ahadith:

Ibn 'Umar reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'When you pass by a garden of Paradise, avail yourselves of it.' The Companions asked, 'What are the gardens of Paradise, O Messenger of Allah?' The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, 'The assemblies or circles of *dhikr*. There are some angels of Allah who go about looking for such assemblies of *dhikr*, and when they find them they surround them'."

Muslim reports that Mu'awiyyah said, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, went out to a circle of his Companions and asked, 'What makes you sit here?' They said, 'We are sitting here in order to remember Allah and to praise Him because He guided us to the path of Islam and he conferred favors upon us.' Thereupon he adjured them by Allah and asked if that was the only purpose of their sitting there. 'They said, By Allah, we are sitting here for this purpose only.' At this the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'I am not asking you to take an oath because of any misapprehension against you, but only because Gabriel came to me and informed me that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, was telling the angels that He is proud of you'."

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When any group of men remember Allah, angels surround them and mercy covers them, tranquility descends upon them, and Allah mentions them to those who are with Him."

Excellence of Pronouncing *La Ilaha illa-Allah* Sincerely

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When a servant of Allah utters the words *la ilaha illa'Allah* (there is none worthy of worship except Allah) sincerely, the doors of heaven open up for these words until they reach the Throne of Allah, so long as its utterer keeps away from the major sins."[171]

Abu Hurairah also reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Renew your faith." "How can we renew our faith?" they asked. The Prophet,

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[171] Tirmidhi, who says it is a *hasan gharib* hadith.

peace be upon him, replied, "Say always, *'La ilaha ill-Allah'*."[172]

Jabir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The best remembrance of Allah is to repeat *La ilaha ill-Allah* and the best prayer is *alhamdu li-Allah* (All Praise is due to Allah)."[173]

Excellence of *Tasbih*, *Tahmid*, *Tahlil*, *Takbir* and Other Supplications

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "There are two phrases that are light on the tongue but heavy on the scale of rewards and are dear to (Allah) the Gracious One. These are,

subhanallah wa bi-hamdihi «سبحان الله وبحمده»
(All Glory is to Allah and all Praise to Him), and
subhanallah al-azim «سبحان الله العظيم»
(Glorified is Allah, the Great)."[174]

Abu Hurairah also reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "I love repeating

«سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا إله إلا الله والله أكبر»

subhanallah, wal-hamdulillah, wa la-ilaha ill-Allah, wa-Allahu akbar (Glorified is Allah, all praise is due to Allah, and there is no God but Allah, Allah is the greatest) more than all that the sun shines upon."[175]

Abu Dharr reported, "the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Shall I tell you the words that Allah loves the most?' I said, 'Yes, tell me, O Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'The words most dear to Allah are

«سبحان الله وبحمده»

subhan-Allah wa bihamdihi (Glorified is Allah with all praise due to Him)'." This is narrated by Muslim and Tirmidhi. In Tirmidhi's version, we also find the following: "The words most dear to Allah which He has chosen for His angels are

«سبحان ربي وبحمده ، سبحان ربي وبحمده»

subhana Rabbi wa bihamdihi, subhana Rabbi wa bihamdihi (Glorified is my Lord with all praise due to Him, Glorified is my Lord with all praise due to Him)."

Jabir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever says

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[172] Reported by Ahmad with a sound chain of authorities.
[173] Reported by Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and Al-Hakim, who considers its chain sound.
[174] Muslim, Bukhari, and Tirmidhi.
[175] Muslim and Tirmidhi.

Subhan-Allah-al-Azim wa bihamdihi (Glorified is Allah, the Great, with all praise due to Him). will have a palm tree planted for him in Paradise."[176]

Abu Sa'id reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Perform the enduring goods deeds more frequently." The asked, "What are these enduring deeds?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, *At-Takbir*,[177] *At-Tahlil*,[178] *At-Tasbih*,[179] *al-hamdu li-Allah*,[180] and *la hawla wala quwwata illa billah*.[181] This is reported by An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim, who consider its chain of authorities sound.

Abdallah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "During the Night Journey I met Ibrahim who said to me, 'O Muhammad, convey my greetings to your ummah, and tell them that the Paradise is of pure land, its water is sweet, and its expanse is vast, spacious and even. And its plants are *Subhan-Allah, wal-hamdulillah, wala ilah illallah, wa-Allahu akbar*'."[182]

Samura ibn Jundab reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The dearest phrases to Allah are four: *Subhan Allah*, (Glorified is Allah), *al-Hamdulillah* (All praise be to Allah), *Wa la ilaha ill-Allah* (There is no God but Allah), and *Allah-o-Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest). There is no harm in beginning them in any order you choose while remembering Allah."[183]

Abu Mas'ud reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone recites the last two verses of Surat al-Baqarah, they will suffice for him,"[184] that is, these two verses will bring him a reward equivalent to that of a night prayer, and will safeguard him from any hurt during that night. Ibn Khuzaimah in his *Sahih* has also mentioned it under the chapter "The Recitation of the Qur'an Equivalent in Reward to a Night Prayer."

Abu Sa'id reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked, "Can anyone of you recite a third of the Qur'an during the night?" The Companions considered this rather difficult and they said, "Who among us can do so, O Prophet of Allah?" Thereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "(Say:) He is Allah. the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is he begotten; and there is none like unto Him."[185]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Who-

«لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، له الملك ، وله الحمد ، وهو على كل شيء قدير»

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[176] Reported by Tirmidhi who considers it a sound hadith.

[177] Saying *Allahu akbar* i.e., Allah is the greatest.

[178] Saying *la ilaha ill-Allah*, i.e., there is no god but Allah.

[179] Saying *subhan-Allah* meaning, Exalted and far removed is Allah from any weakness.

[180] This means: All praise belongs to Allah alone.

[181] There is no power nor any authority except with the permission of Allah.

[182] Reported by Tirmidhi and At-Tabarani, whose version also contains *wala hawla wala quwwata illa billah*.

[183] Muslim.

[184] Bukhari and Muslim.

[185] The reference here is to recitation of Surah 112 (Suratul Ikhlas) of the Qur'an, which the Prophet, peace be upon him, described as equivalent to reciting one-third of the Qur'an. This hadith is reported by Bukhari, Muslim, and Nasa'i.

ever says,

'La Ilaha illa-Allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamd wa huwa 'ala kulli shai'in qadir'

a hundred times during a day will have a reward equivalent to the reward for freeing ten slaves. Besides, a hundred good deeds will be recorded for him and a hundred bad deeds of his will be wiped off, and it will be a safeguard for him from Satan that day until evening, and no one will be better in deeds than such a person except he who does more than that."[186] In the version of Muslim, Tirmidhi, and Nasa'i, we find this addition: "And whoever says

«سبحان الله وبحمده»

subhan Allah wa bi-hamdihi

a hundred times during a day, will have all his sins wiped off even if they were as numerous as the foam on the surface of the sea."

Excellence of *Istighfar*

Anas reported that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying that Allah says, "O son of Adam, whatever you asked Me and expect from Me I forgave — respecting that which you owed to Me — and I don't care [how great this was]. O Son of Adam, even if your sins pile up to the sky and then you seek My forgiveness I will forgive you, and O son of Adam, even if you have an earthful of sins but you meet Me without associating any other thing with Me I will forgive you."[187]

Abdallah b. 'Abbas said, "If one supplicates without fail for forgiveness from Allah, He finds a way out for him to get out of every distress and difficulty, and gives him sustenance through ways utterly unthought of."[188]

Some Comprehensive Forms of *Dhikr*

Juwairiyah[189] reported that one day the Prophet, peace be upon him, left her apartment in the morning as she was busy observing her dawn prayer in her place of worship. He came back in the forenoon and she was still sitting there. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to her, "You have been in the same place since I left you?" She said, "Yes." Thereupon the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "I recited four words three times after I left you and if these were to be weighed against what you have recited since morning these would outweigh them, and these words are: *Subhanallah wa bihamdihi 'adada khalqihi wa rida' nafsihi wa zinata 'arshihi wa midada kalimatihi* (hallowed be Allah and

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[186] Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah.

[187] Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it a *hasan sahih* hadith.

[188] Reported by Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and Al-Hakim, who says its chain of authorities is sound.

[189] One of the wives of the Prophet, peace be upon him.

praise is due to Him to the extent of the number of His creation and to the extent of His pleasure and to the extent of the weight of His Throne and to the extent of ink used in recording words for His Praise)."[190]

Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas reported that once the Prophet, peace be upon him, saw a woman who had some date-stones or pebbles which she was using as beads to glorify Allah. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to her, "Let me tell you something which would be easier and more excellent for you than that." So he told her to say instead *Subhan-Allah 'adada ma khalaqa fil-ard wa subhan Allah 'adada ma khalaqa bayna dhalika wa subhan-Allah 'adada ma huwa khaliq wa Allahu akbar mithla dhalik wa la ilaha illa-Allahu mithla dhalik wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa mithla dhalik* (Glory be to Allah as many times as the number of what He has created in Heaven, Glory be to Allah as many times as the number of what He has created on Earth, Glory be to Allah as many times as the number of what He has created between them, Glory be to Allah as many times as the number of that which He is creating, Allah is the most great a similar number of times, praise be to Allah a similar number of times, and There is no god but Allah a similar number of times, and there is no might and no power except with Allah a similar number of times)."[191]

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, told them, "A servant of Allah said,

«يا رب لك الحمد كما ينبغي لجلال وجهك ، ولعظيم سلطانك»

'My Lord! All praise is for You as much as Your Glory and Sublime Majesty rightly deserve.' This was too much for the two angels to record. They did not know how to record it. So they soared to the heaven and said, 'Our Lord! Your servant has said something which we don't know how to record?' Allah asked them — and, of course, He knew what the servant had said — 'What did My servant say?' They said, 'He has said, "My Lord! All praise is for You as much as Your Glory and Sublime Majesty rightly deserve." Allah said to them, 'Write it down as My servant has said until he should meet Me and I reward him for it'."[192]

Counting on One's Fingers is Better than Counting Beads

Yusairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, commanded them (the emigrant women) to be regular in remembering Allah by saying, "Allah is the most great," "Glory be to Allah, the Holy," and "There is no God but Allah," and never to be forgetful of Allah and His Mercy, and to count them on their fingers, for the fingers will be questioned and will speak.[193]

Abdallah b. 'Amr b. al-'As reported, "I saw the Prophet, peace be upon

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[190] Reported by Muslim and Abu Daw'ud.

[191] Reported by the Compilers of the *Sunan* and Al-Hakim, who says it is a sound hadith according to the criterion of Muslim.

[192] Reported by Ahmad and Ibn Majah.

[193] Reported in the *Sunan* and by Al-Hakim with a sound chain of authorities.

him, counting the glorifications of Allah on his right hand's fingers."[194]

Warning Against Sitting in Company Where Allah is Not Mentioned and Blessings on His Prophet are Not Invoked

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If people sit in an assembly in which they do not remember Allah nor invoke a blessing on the Prophet, it will be a cause of grief for them on the Day of Judgment." This is reported by Tirmidhi, who says it is a sound hadith.

In the version of Ahmad, however, we read, "If people sit in an assembly in which they do not remember Allah, it will be a cause of sorrow for them, and if a man is walking and does not remember Allah, it will be a cause of sorrow for him, and if a man lies down on his bed and does not remember Allah, it will be a cause of sorrow for him." Another version says, "It will be a sorrow for them, even if they are given Paradise in reward."

The author of *Fath al-'Allam* says, "This hadith proves that it is incumbent on one to remember Allah and invoke blessings on the Prophet while sitting in an assembly, for whether we take the words 'cause of grief or sorrow' to mean torment of fire or any other chastisement, obviously a punishment is incurred only when an obligatory act is neglected or a forbidden act is committed, and here it is both the remembrance of Allah and the invoking of blessings on His Prophet that are apparently incumbent."

Atonement for Sitting in an Assembly

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone sits in an assembly where there is much clamor and says before getting up to leave,

«سبحانك اللهم وبحمدك أشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت أستغفرك وأتوب إليك»

Subhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika, ashadu an-la illaha illa-anta, astaghfiruka wa atubu ilayka (Glory be to You, O Allah, and I begin with declaring all praise is due to You, I testify that there is no god but You; I ask Your pardon and turn to You in repentance), he will be forgiven any sin that he might have committed while in that assembly.[195]

Atonement for Backbiting

It is related that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The atonement for backbiting [and slander] is to pray for forgiveness of the person who was slandered and to say,

«اللهم اغفر لنا وله»

'O Allah, forgive us and him'."

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[194] Reported in the *Sunan*.

[195] Tirmidhi and Al-Baihaqi, (Kitab ad-D'wat Al-kabir).

The preferable course in this regard is to pray for forgiveness of the person who was the target of the slander and to mention his good qualities. This will wipe off the effects of such backbiting, and it is not necessary to announce such a thing.

Chapter seven

SUPPLICATIONS

Injunction on Supplication

Allah has commanded people to call upon Him humbly and sincerely, promising them He will respond to their prayers and fulfill their needs.

Nu'man b. Bashir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Verily supplication is worship." Then he recited the Qur'anic verse, "And your Lord says, 'Call on Me. I will answer your prayer, but those who are too arrogant to serve me will surely find themselves humiliated in Hell!"[196]

'Abdar Razzaq reported from Al-Hasan that the Companions asked the Prophet, peace be upon him, "Where is our Lord?" At this Allah sent down the following verse of the Qur'an, "When My servants ask you (O, Muhammad) concerning Me, I am indeed close to them. I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calls upon Me."[197]

Abu Hurairah reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Nothing is more dear to Allah than one's supplication to Him."[198]

Abu Hurairah also reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Whoever wants Allah to answer his prayers during difficult times, should supplicate to Him more and more in times of ease'."[199]

Abu Ya'la related from Anas that the Prophet, peace be upon him, reporting from his Lord said, "Allah said, 'There are four characteristics, of which one is Mine, one yours, one common between Me and you, and one is common between you and My other servants. The one that is Mine is that you shall not associate any other god with Me, the one that is for you is that when you do a good deed I shall reward you for it, the one that is common between Me and you is that when you supplicate I shall respond to your supplications, and the one that is common between you and My other servants is that you should like for them what you like for your own selves'."

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196 Qur'an 40:60. This is reported by Ahmad and *Sunan*.

197 Qur'an 2:186.

198 Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

199 Tirmidhi.

In a sound hadith the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Allah's wrath is on the one who does not call upon Him for help."

'Aishah reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Precautions are of no avail against the decree of Allah, but the supplication benefits in the case of a calamity that strikes or is about to strike. And when a calamity descends the supplication intercepts it and holds it at bay until the Day of Resurrection'."[200]

Salman Al-Farisi reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Nothing can avert the decree of Allah except supplication, and nothing increases life except virtuous deeds."[201]

Abu 'Awanah and Ibn Hibban reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When one of you supplicates, he should ask Allah for something important and great, for nothing is difficult for Allah."

Etiquette of Supplication

There are certain manners that must be observed while making a supplication to Allah. These are given below:

Pursuit of lawful means of Livelihood. Ibn 'Abbas reported, "Once, when I recited the verses of the Qur'an, 'O you people! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good' (2:168) in the presence of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas got up and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Ask Allah to make me one whose supplication is heard.' At this the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'O Sa'd, consume lawful things and your supplications will be heard, and by Him in Whose hands is the soul of Muhammad, when a man puts into his stomach a morsel of what is forbidden his prayers are not accepted for forty days, and a servant of Allah whose body is nourished by usury or by what is forbidden becomes more deserving of the Hell fire."[202]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "O people, Allah is Good and He, therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying, 'O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do',[203] and He said: 'O those who believe, eat of the good things that We gave you'."[204] The Prophet, peace be upon him, then made mention of a person who travels widely, his hair dishevelled, and covered with dust. "He lifts his hands and makes supplication, 'O Lord, O Lord,' but his diet is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful, and his nourishment is unlawful. How then can his supplication be accepted?"[205]

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200 Reported by Al-Bazar, At-Tabrani, and Al-Hakim, who says its chain of authorities is sound.

201 Tirmidhi.

202 Al-Hafiz b. Marduwiyah.

203 Qur'an 23:51

204 Qur'an 2:172

205 Muslim and Ahmad.

Facing the Qiblah while making a Supplication. The Prophet (peace be upon him went out and prayed for rain and faced the *qiblah*.

Supplicating at the most Opportune Times and Locations. These are, for instance, the day of 'Arafah, month of Ramadan, Friday, the last part of the night, at dawn, during prostration, at the time of rainfall, between the *adhan* and *iqamah*, at the time of encounter of armies, at times of panic, and when one's heart is soft and tender.

Abu Umamah reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, was asked, 'What supplication finds the greatest acceptance?' He answered: 'A prayer offered in the middle of the latter part of the night and after the prescribed Prayers'."[206]

Abu Hurairah reported, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The servant is nearest to his Lord when he is prostrating to Him, so make supplication in this state."[207] There are very many ahadith found in various books on this subject.

Raising One's hands to one's shoulders. Ibn 'Abbas is reported as saying, "When asking for something from Allah, you should raise your hands opposite to your shoulders; when asking for forgiveness you should point with one finger; and when making an earnest supplication you should spread out both your hands." This is reported by Abu Daw'ud.

Malik b. Yassar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Supplicate Allah with the palms of your hands, and do not supplicate Him with their backs upwards."

Salman reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Your Lord, the Blessed and the Exalted One, is Modest and Generous, and He loathes to turn away His servant empty-handed when he raises his hands to Him in supplication."

Starting the Supplication with Allah's Praise and Blessings on His Prophet. Fudalah b. 'Ubaid reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard a man supplicating during prayer. He did not glorify Allah, nor did he invoke blessings on the Prophet. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "He has been hasty." Then he called the man and said either to him, or to someone else, "When any one of you prays, he should begin by glorifying and praising his Lord and then he should invoke blessings on the Prophet, peace be upon him, and after that he should supplicate Allah for anything he wishes."

Supplicating with attention and humility, in a voice neither loud nor low. Allah says: "Neither say your prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between."[208] And "Call on your Lord with humility and

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[206] Reported by Tirmidhi with a sound chain of authorities.
[207] Muslim.
[208] Qur'an 17:110

in private, for Allah does not love those who go beyond bounds."[209]

Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari reported, "Once the people raised their voices in supplication. At this the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'Be easy on yourselves. You are not calling upon someone deaf or absent. You are calling upon one Who is All-seeing and All-hearing. He is nearer to you than the neck of your mount. O Abdallah b. Qais, shall I tell you a word that is one of the treasures of Paradise? It is: "There is no power nor any might except with the permission of Allah"'."[210]

Abdallah b. 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Hearts are like vessels, some more attentive and capacious than others. When you supplicate Allah you should be certain of being answered, and know that Allah does not answer a supplication that comes from a careless and inattentive heart."[211]

Supplications without a sin or breaking blood ties. Ahmad records that Abu Sa'id reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Any Muslim who makes a supplication containing nothing that is sinful and nothing that involves breaking ties of blood relationships, will be given for it by Allah one of these three things: He may accept his request, or assign its reward for him in the next world, or turn away from him an equivalent amount of evil." Those who heard it said, "We would, then, make many supplications." The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, "Allah is more than ready to answer what you ask."

Avoiding hastiness for acceptance of supplication. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Your supplication will be answered if you are not impatient, and if you do not say, 'I supplicated but my supplication was not heard'."[212]

Supplicating with confidence in its acceptance. Abu Hurairah also reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "None of you should say, 'O Allah, forgive me if You wish, (or) O Allah, have mercy on me if you wish.' Rather you should be firm in your request, for (Allah does whatever He wishes) and no one can force Him to do otherwise."

Choosing comprehensive words for supplication. The Prophet, peace be upon him, loved comprehensive supplications but used other supplications as well. The Qur'anic supplication,

«ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار»

"Our Lord, give us good in this world, and give us good in the hereafter," is just such a comprehensive supplication.

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[209] Qur'an 7:55.
[210] Muslim and Bukhari.
[211] Ahmad.
[212] Malik.

A man came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, "O Messenger of Allah, which is the best supplication?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Supplicate to your Lord for forgiveness and security in this world and in the Hereafter." He came again the next day, and then again on the following (third) day and asked him the same thing. The Prophet, peace be upon him, gave him the same answer, and then said, "If you are given forgiveness and security in this world and in the Hereafter you have attained success." Another version says: "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'No supplication made by a person is better than asking

«اللهم إني أسألك المعافاة في الدنيا والآخرة»

"O Allah, I ask You for security in this world and in the Hereafter'".[213]

Avoid Supplicating Against (Cursing) Yourself, your Family, or Property. Jabir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Do not supplicate against your own selves, your children, your servants, or your property, lest you should supplicate at a time when supplications are accepted."

Repeating a supplication three times. Abdallah b. Mas'ud reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, loved to repeat his supplication three times, and pray for forgiveness three times."[214]

When supplicating for someone begin with yourself. The Qur'an says that the believers pray, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren in faith who have preceded us in faith." Ubayy b. Ka'b reported, "When someone requested the Prophet, peace be upon him, to pray for him, he used to begin by supplicating for his ownself."[215]

Supplication of a father, of one who is fasting, a traveller, and of a person who is wronged. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The supplications of three persons are accepted, and there is no doubt concerning their acceptance: the supplication of a father, of a traveller, and of one who is wronged."[216]

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said, "The supplications of three persons are not rejected: the supplication of a fasting person at the time of breaking fast, of a just ruler, and of a person who is wronged. Allah causes their supplications to rise above the clouds, and gates of heaven are opened for them, and God says, 'By My Majesty, I will help you, even it be after a while'."[217]

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[213] Ibn Majah.
[214] Abu Daw'ud.
[215] Reported by Tirmidhi with a sound chain of authorities.
[216] Reported by Ahmad, Abu Daw'ud, and Tirmidhi, with a sound chain of transmitters.
[217] Reported by Tirmidhi with a sound chain of authorities.

Prayer of a Muslim for Another Muslim in his Absence

Safwan ibn 'Abdallah reported, "I visited Abu Darda's house in Syria. I did not find him there but Umm Darda was present at the house. She asked, 'Do you intend to perform Hajj during this year?' I replied, 'Yes.' She said, 'Do supplicate Allah for us, for Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, used to say, "The supplication of a Muslim for his brother in his absence is accepted when he makes a supplication for blessings for his brother, and the commissioned Angel says, 'Amen, May it be for you too!'"' I went to the market and met Abu Darda and he narrated a similar report from Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him.[218]

Abdallah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The supplication that gets the quickest answer is the one made by one Muslim for another in his absence."[219]

'Umar ibn al-Khattab reports, "I sought permission of the Prophet, peace be upon him, to perform 'Umrah. He gave me permission, and said, 'My younger brother, do not forget me in your prayers.' 'Umar said, 'It was a word more pleasing to me than the entire wealth of the world'."

Opening Words Recommended for a Supplication

Buraidah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard a man saying, "O Allah, I ask You, I bear witness that there is no god but You, the One, the Eternal, Besought of all, Who begets not, nor is begotten; and there is none like unto Him." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "You have asked Allah by His Greatest Name. When one asks Him by this name, He gives, what one desires, and when supplicated by this name He answers."[220]

Commenting on the above hadith, Al-Mundhri says, "Our teacher Abu al-Hasan Al-Maqdisi said, 'There is no weakness in its chain, and no other and more sound hadith is found on this subject'."

Mu'adh b. Jabal reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard a man saying, " O Lord of Majesty and Honor!" At this the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Your supplication will be heard, so ask for what you want to ask."[221]

Anas reported, "Once the Prophet, peace be upon him, passed by Abu 'Ayyash, Zayd b. as-Samit az-Zarqi, while he was offering prayer and saying, 'O Allah, I call upon You for to You is due all praise, there is no god but You, O the Compassionate One, O the True Benefactor, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of Majesty and Honor, O the Living One, O the One Who is self-subsisting and sustains all.' The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'You have called upon Allah by His greatest name. Anyone calling upon

[218] Reported by Muslim and Abu Daw'ud.

[219] Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi.

[220] Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi, who regards it a sound hadith.

[221] Reported by Tirmidhi, who says it is a sound hadith.

Him by this name is heard, and whatever one asks Him for, He grants it'."[222]

Mu'awiyah reported, "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying, Whoever supplicates with these five phrases will be granted whatever he asks,

«لا إله إلا الله والله أكبر ، لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، له الملك ، وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير لا إله إلا الله ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله»

la ilaha illa-Allah wallahu akbar (there is no god but Allah and Allah is the greatest), *la ilaha ill-Allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu* (there is no god but only Allah, and he has no partners), *lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamd wa huwa 'ala kulli shai'in qadir* (to Him belongs the authority and His is all praise, and He has power over all things), *la ilaha illa-Allahu wa la hawla wala quwwata illa billah* (there is no god but Allah and there is no power nor any strength except with His permission)."[223]

Supplications for Morning and Evening

The time for the supplications of morning is from dawn until the sunrise, and those of the evening are meant for the time between 'Asr (late afternoon) until the sunset.

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone said in the morning and evening

«سبحان الله وبحمده»

subhana-Allah wa bihamdihi (Glory to Allah and all praise to Him) a hundred times, on the Day of Judgment none will come with anything better than that except the person who utters similar words or adds some to them."

Ibn Mas'ud reported, "When it was evening the Prophet, peace be upon him, would supplicate,

«أمسينا وأمسى الملك لله ، والحمد لله ، لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير. رب أسألك خير ما في هذه الليلة وخير ما بعدها وأعوذ بك من شر ما في هذه الليلة وشر ما بعدها ، رب أعوذ بك من الكسل وسوء الكبر ، رب أعوذ بك من عذاب في النار وعذاب في القبر»

"We have evening and the whole Kingdom of Allah also has evening and all praise is due to Allah. There is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner with Him, His is the Sovereignty and all Praise is due to Him, and He has power over all things. O Allah, I ask You the good of this night and I seek refuge in You from the evil of this night and the evil that follows it. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from sloth and from the evil of vanity. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the torment of Hell-Fire and from the torment of the grave." And likewise

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[222] Reported by Ahmad and others. Al-Hakim says that it is sound according to the criterion of Muslim.

[223] Reported by At-Tabarani with a sound chain.

when it was morning he would say,

«أصبحنا وأصبح الملك لله»

"It is morning for us and [also] for the whole Kingdom of Allah."[224]

Abdallah b. Habib reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Speak." I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what should I say?" He replied, "Recite *Surat al-Ikhlas*, and the two last surahs (of the Qur'an), i.e. *Surat al-Falaq* and *Surat an-Nas*, in the morning and evening three times, and it will suffice you for everything."

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to teach his Companions, "When it is morning you should say,

«اللهم بك أصبحنا وبك أمسينا وبك نحيا وبك نموت وإليك النشور»

'O Allah, we have reached morning with Your help and evening with Your help, and with Your help we live and by Your command we die, and to You is our Resurrection.' And when it is evening you should say,

«اللهم بك أمسينا وبك أصبحنا وبك نحيا وبك نموت وإليك المصير»

'O Allah, with Your help we have reached evening, and with Your help we will reach morning, with Your help we live and by Your command we die, and to You is our return'."[225]

Shaddad b. Aws reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The best supplication for forgiveness is to say,

«اللهم أنت ربي لا إله إلا أنت ، خلقتني وأنا عبدك ، وأنا على عهدك ووعدك ما استطعت ، أعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت ، أبوء لك بنعمتك علي وأبوء بذنبي فاغفر لي فإنه لا يغفر الذنوب إلا أنت»

'Allahumma anta Rabbi la ilaha illa anta, Khalaqtani wa ana 'abduka, wa ana 'ala 'ahdika wa wa'dika mastata'tu. A'udhu bika min sharri ma sana'tu, abu'u laka bini'matika 'alayya wa abu'u laka bidhanbi faghfirli innahu la yaghfiru-dhdhunuba illa anta (O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no god but You. You created me and I am Your servant, and I try my best to keep my covenant (faith) with You and to live in the hope of Your promise. I seek refuge in You from evil done by me. I acknowledge Your favors upon me and I acknowledge my sins. So forgive me for none forgives sins but You.'") The Prophet, peace be upon him, added, "If somebody recites this during the day with firm faith in it, and dies on the same day before the evening, he will be one of the people of Paradise. And if somebody recites it at night with firm faith in it, and dies before the morning, he will be one of the people of Paradise."[226]

Abu Hurairah reported that once Abu Bakr as-Siddiq asked the Prophet,

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[224] Muslim

[225] Reported by Tirmidhi, who says it is a *hasan sahih* hadith.

[226] Bukhari.

peace be upon him, to tell him something to pray in the morning and in the evening. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Say.

«اللهم عالم الغيب والشهادة فاطر السموات والأرض رب كل شيء ومليكه ، أشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت ، أعوذ بك من شر نفسي وشر الشيطان وشركه وأن نقترف سوءاً على أنفسنا أو نجره إلى مسلم»

O Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who knows the unseen and the seen, Lord and Possessor of everything! I testify that there is no god but You. I seek refuge in You from the evil within myself, from the evil of the devil, and from his inciting one to attribute partners to Allah." Then he added, "Say this in the morning, in the evening, and when you go to bed."[227]

'Uthman b. 'Affan reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'If any servant of Allah says daily in the morning and in the evening,

«بسم الله الذي لا يضر مع اسمه شيء في الأرض ولا في السماء وهو السميع العليم»

'In the name of Allah, by Whose name nothing in the earth or in the heaven can do any harm, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing!" three times, nothing will harm him."[228]

Thawban reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone says in the morning and in the evening,

«رضيت بالله رباً وبالإسلام ديناً وبمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم نبياً»

'I am pleased with Allah as my Lord, with Islam as my religion, and with Muhammad as the Prophet,' Allah will certainly please him."[229]

Anas b. Malik reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone says in the morning or in the evening,

«اللهم إني أصبحت أشهدك وأشهد حملة عرشك وملائكتك وجميع خلقك أنك أنت الله لا إله إلا أنت وحدك لا شريك لك ، وأن محمداً عبدك ورسولك»

'O Allah! it is morning, I call to bear witness to You, and to the bearers of Your Throne, Your angels, and all Your creatures, that You are Allah other than Whom there is no god, and that Muhammad is Your servant and Messenger,' Allah will emancipate one-fourth of him from Hell. If one says it twice, Allah will emancipate one-half of him from Hell. If one says it three times, Allah will emancipate three-fourths of him (from Hell). And if he says it four times, Allah will emancipate him (completely) from Hell.[230]

Abdallah ibn Ghannam reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said,

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[227] Reported by Tirmidhi who says it is *hasan sahih*.

[228] Reported by Tirmidhi who regards it a *hasan sahih* (sound) hadith.

[229] Tirmidhi, who says it is a sound (*hasan sahih*) hadith.

[230] Tirmidhi.

"If anyone says in the morning,

«اللهم ما أصبح بي من نعمة أو بأحد من خلقك فمنك وحدك لا شريك لك ، لك الحمد ولك الشكر»

'O Allah! Whatever favor has come to me, has come from You alone Who has no partner. To You all praise is due and all thanksgiving,' he expresses his thanksgiving for the day. And if anyone says the same in the evening, he expresses his thanks for the night.[231]

Abdallah ibn 'Umar said, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, always uttered these supplications in the evening and in the morning:

«اللهم إني أسألك العافية في الدنيا والآخرة ، اللهم إني أسألك العفو والعافية في ديني ودنياي وأهلي ومالي ، اللهم استر عوراتي وآمن روعاتي ، اللهم احفظني من بين يدي ومن خلفي وعن يميني وعن شمالي ومن فوقي وأعوذ بعظمتك أن أغتال من تحتي»

'O Allah, I ask You for security in this world and in the Hereafter. O Allah! I ask You for forgiveness and security in my *din* and in my worldly affairs, in my family and in my property. O Allah! Cover up my faults, and keep me safe from the things I fear. O Allah! Guard me from the front and the behind, from the right and the left, and from above. And I seek in Your greatness the protection from unexpected harm from beneath."[232] Waki' said, "This means to be swallowed up by the earth."

'Abdur-Rahman b. Abu Bakrah said that he told his father, "O my father! I hear you supplicating every morning with the words:

«اللهم عافني في بدني ، اللهم عافني في سمعي ، اللهم عافني في بصري لا إله إلا أنت»

'O Allah! Grant me sound health. O Allah! Grant me sound hearing. O Allah! Grant me sound eyesight. There is no god but You.' You repeat them three times in the morning and three times in the evening.' He replied, 'I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, using these words as a supplication and I like to follow his practice'."[233]

Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone said,

«اللهم إني أصبحت منك في نعمة وعافية وستر فأتم نعمتك علي وعافيتك وسترك في الدنيا والآخرة»

'O Allah, I have risen with Your help, blessings, security, and protection, so complete Your blessings upon me, Your security for me, and your protection, in this world and in the Hereafter,' three times in the morning and in the evening, Allah will certainly complete His favors upon him."

Anas reported that once the Prophet, peace be upon him, exclaimed,

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[231] Abu Daw'ud.

[232] Abu Daw'ud and Al-Hakim.

[233] Abu Daw'ud.

"Can't anyone of you be like Abu Damdam?" The Companions asked, "Who is Abu Damdam, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "When he gets up in the morning he says, 'O Allah, I offer my honor and life to You?' So that he would not abuse those who abused him, nor would he wrong those who wronged him, or hit those who hit him."

Abu Darda reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said. "If anyone says daily in the morning and in the evening,

«حسبي الله لا إله إلا هو عليه توكلت ، وهو رب العرش العظيم»

'Allah suffices me, there is no god but He, in Him is my trust, and he is the Lord of the Throne, Supreme,' seven times, Allah will suffice him for all the concerns of the life of this world and of the Hereafter."

It is reported that Talq b. Habib said, "A man came to Abu Darda and said to him, 'O Abu Darda, your house has burned.' He said: 'No, it cannot be burned. Allah will never allow this to happen because of the words that I heard from the Prophet, peace be upon him. Whoever says these words in the beginning of a day, the Prophet, peace be upon him, told us, will not be afflicted by a misfortune until the end of the day, and whoever says these words in the evening will not be afflicted until morning. These words are,

«اللهم أنت ربي ، لا إله إلا أنت ، عليك توكلت وأنت رب العرش العظيم ، ما شاء الله كان ، وما لم يشأ لم يكن ، لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم ، أعلم أن الله على كل شيء قدير ، وأن الله قد أحاط بكل شيء علماً اللهم إني أعوذ بك من شر نفسي ، ومن شر كل دابة أنت آخذ بناصيتها ، إن ربي على صراط مستقيم»

"O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no god but You. I put my trust in You, You are the Lord of the Mighty Throne. Whatever Allah wills will happen and what He does not will, cannot happen. There is no power or strength except with Allah, the Exalted, the Mighty. I know that Allah has power over all things, and Allah comprehends all things in knowledge. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the evil of myself and from the evil of all creatures under Your control. Surely the straight way is my Sustainer's way".'" In some versions of this hadith we further find that he said, "Come, let us go. So he went with them to his house. They found all the area surrounding the house burned but his house was not damaged."

Supplications at Bed-Time

Hudhaifah and Abu Dharr reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, went to bed, he would say,

«باسمك اللهم أحيا وأموت»

"O Allah, by Your name I live and die." And when he woke up he said,

«الحمد لله الذي أحيانا بعد ما أماتنا وإليه النشور»

"Praise be to Allah Who gave us life after death and to Him is the return." H‹
placed his right hand under his cheek and prayed, three times,

«اللهم قني عذابك يوم تبعث عبادك»

"O Allah, save me from Your punishment on the day when You will raise You
creature." He would also say,

اللهم رب السموات ورب الأرض ورب العرش العظيم ، ربنا ورب كل شيء ، فالق الحب
النوى ، منزل التوراة والإنجيل والقرآن ، أعوذ بك من شر كل ذي شر أنت آخذ بناصيته ،
نت الأول فليس قبلك شيء ، وأنت الآخر فليس بعدك شيء ، وأنت الظاهر فليس فوقك شيء،
أنت الباطن فليس دونك شيء ، اقض عنا الدين وأغننا من الفقر»

"O Allah, Lord of the heavens, the earth, and the Mighty Throne, our Lord anc
the Lord of everything, Who causes the seed to grow and the date-stone to spli
and sprout, Who sent down Taurah, Injil, and the Qur'an, I seek refuge in Yoı
from the evil of all evil-mongers under Your Control. You are the First anc
there is nothing before You, and You are the Last, and there is nothing afte
You. You are the Evident and there is nothing beyond You, and You are th‹
Source and there is no power beside You. Relieve us of our debt an‹
poverty."This is reported by Bukhari.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also prayed,

«الحمد لله الذي أطعمنا وسقانا وكفانا فكم ممن لا كافي ولا مؤوي»

"Praise be to Allah Who has fed us and given us to drink, met all our needs, an‹
given us refuge, while there are many who have neither anyone to meet thei
needs nor anyone to provide them with a refuge." And every night when h
retired to bed he would hold out his hands together imploringly and blow ove
them after reciting Surah Al-Ikhlas, Surah Al-Falaq, and Surah An-Nas, an
then rub his hands over whichever parts of his body he was able to rub, startin
with his head, face, and front of his body. He used to do that three times.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, instructed his Companions that whe
they go to bed they should supplicate,

باسمك ربي وضعت جنبي ، وبك أرفعه إن أمسكت نفسي فارحمها وإن أرسلتها فاحفظها
ما تحفظ به عبادك الصالحين»

"In Your name, O Lord, I lay me down to sleep. And by Your leave I rais
myself up. So if You take away my soul during sleep, forgive it, and if You kee
it alive after sleep protect it just as You protect Your pious servants."

The Prophet, peace be upon him, once advised his daughter, Fatimal
"Say *subhan-Allah* thirty three times, *al-hamdu-lillah*, thirty three times, an
Allahu akbar, thirty four times." He also commended the recitation of *ayata‹
Kursi*, the verse of the Throne,[234] along with the above supplications, and sai
that he who does so will be under the protection of Allah, Who will assign

[234] Qur'an 2:255

protector to protect him.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to Bara, "When you go to bed make wudu as you do for the regular prayer, and then lie down on your right side and say,

«اللهم أسلمت نفسي إليك ووجهت وجهي إليك وفوضت أمري إليك وألجات ظهري إليك رغبة ورهبة إليك لا ملجأ ولا منجا منك إلا إليك أمنت بكتابك الذي أنزلت ونبيك الذي أرسلت»

O Allah, I surrender my soul to You, and I turn my face toward You, and I trust my affairs to Your care. I turn to You in fear and hope. There is no refuge nor any protection against You except in You. I believe in Your book which You have revealed to Your Prophet whom You sent'." Then he added, "If you die, you will die in your true nature, and these words will be your last words."

Supplication on Waking Up

The Prophet, peace be upon him, advised that on waking up from sleep one should say,

«الحمد لله الذي رد علي روحي وعافاني في جسدي وأذن لي بذكره»

'Thanks be to Allah Who returned my soul, made my body sound, and permitted me to remember Him."

When the Prophet, peace be upon him, woke he would say,

«لا إله إلا أنت سبحانك اللهم أستغفرك لذنبي وأسألك رحمتك اللهم زدني علماً ولا تزغ قلبي بعد إذ هديتني وهب لي من لدنك رحمة إنك أنت الوهاب»

"There is no god but You, glory be to You. O Allah, I seek Your forgiveness of my sins, and ask for Your mercy. O Allah, increase me in knowledge, and let not my heart deviate after You have guided me on the right path. Grant me mercy from You, for You are the Grantor of bounties without measure."

In another sound hadith the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever wakes up from sleep and cannot go back to sleep, and says,

«لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير الحمد لله وسبحان الله ولا إله إلا الله والله أكبر ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله»

La ilaha illa-Allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahul-mulk wa lahul-hamd, wa huwa 'ala kulli sha'in qadeer, al-hamdu lillahi, wa subhan'Allah, wa la ilaha illallahu, wallahu akbar, wala hawla wala quwwata illa billah (there is no god but Allah, He is One and has no partner, to Him belongs all praise and all authority, and He has power over all things, praise be to Allah, glory be to Allah, there is no god but Allah, Allah is the greatest, there is no power nor any authority but with Allah),' and then says, '*Allahumma ighfir li* (O Allah, forgive me), or asks some other thing, will be answered, and if he makes wudu and offers a prayer it will be accepted from him."

When One is Frightened During Sleep

'Umar b. Shu'aib reported from his father and he from his grandfather that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When one of you is frightened during sleep he should say,

«أعوذ بكلمات الله التامات من غضبه وعقابه وشر عباده ومن همزات الشياطين وأن يحضرون»

'I seek protection in the perfect words of Allah, from His displeasure and punishment and from evil people, and from the (evil) prompting of devils and from their presence.' Then nothing will harm him." The narrator added, "Ibn 'Umar used to teach this to his children, both grown up and young, and he would write it on a piece of paper and make them wear it around their necks." The chain of authorities of this hadith is sound.

Khalid b. Walid reported that once he suffered from insomnia. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to him, "Shall I teach you words that will make you go to sleep when you say them? Say,

«اللهم رب السموات السبع وما أظلت ورب الأرضين وما أقلت ورب الشياطين وما أضلت كن لي جاراً من شر خلقك كلهم جميعاً أن يفرط علي أحد منهم أو أن يبغي علي عز جارك وجل ثناؤك ولا إله غيرك»

'O Allah, the Lord of the seven heavens and whatever they cover, Lord of the earths and whatever they contain, Creator of devils and whomever they mislead, be my protector from the evil of all Your creatures lest some of them may hasten with insolence against me or transgress the bounds. Honored is he who is in Your protection and blessed be Your name, there is no god except You'."[235]

Bara' b. 'Azib reported that a man complained to the Prophet, peace be upon him, about fear and depression. The Prophet said to him, 'Say,

«سبحان الله الملك القدوس رب الملائكة والروح جللت السموات والأرض بالعزة والجبروت»

'Glory to Allah, the Holy, the King, Lord of the angels and of Gabriel. Your power and glory encompass the heavens and the earth." The man said these words and Allah healed him of his depression and fear.

Prayer on Dreaming Something Unpleasant

Jabir reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If someone of you sees an unpleasant dream he should spit three times on his left side and seek Allah's refuge from the accursed Satan, and change the side on which he was lying."[236]

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[235] Reported by At-Tabrani in his *Al-Kabir* and *Al-Awsat*. Its chain is sound, although Abdur-Rahman did not hear it from Khalid. Al-Hafiz al-Mundhari has mentioned it.

[236] Reported by Muslim, Abu Daw'ud, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah.

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri reported that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying, "When someone among you sees a good and pleasing dream, he should know that it is from Allah, and so he should praise and thank Allah, and describe to others what he saw in the dream. But if he sees something he dislikes then it is from Satan, so he should seek Allah's refuge from its evil and should not mention it to anyone. It will not harm him."[237]

Prayer On Wearing Clothes

Ibn As-Sinni reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, put on his clothes, whether a shirt, a cloak, or a turban, he would say, "O Allah, I seek from You its goodness and the goodness for which it is made, and I seek Your refuge against its evil and the evil that is apportioned for it."

Mu'adh b. Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone wears a new garment and says,

«الحمد لله الذي كساني هذا ورزقنيه من غير حول مني ولا قوة»

'All thanks and praise be to Allah, Who clothed me and gave me sustenance, whereas I have no power or strength,' Allah will forgive all his previous sins." To pronounce the name of Allah is also recommended, because anything done without invoking Allah's name is flawed.

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri reported that when the Prophet, peace be him, got a new piece of garment, he would mention it, whether a turban or a shirt or a cloak, and then would say,

«اللهم لك الحمد أنت كسوتنيه أسألك خيره وخير ما صنع له وأعوذ بك من شره وشر ما صنع له»

"O Allah all praise and thanks be to You. You have given me this garment. I seek from You its good and the good that is made of it and I seek Your refuge against its evil and the evil that it is made of."[238]

'Umar reported that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, say "If anyone wears some new clothing and says,

«الحمد لله الذي كساني ما أواري به عورتي وأتجمل به في حياتي»

'all praise and thanks be to Allah Who clothed me to cover my nakedness, and made it a means of adornment for me,' and then takes his old garment and gives it in charity, will be under the protection of Allah and will be treated as if struggling in the cause of Allah, in life and after his death."

On Seeing Another Muslim Wearing Some New Clothes

According to a sound hadith, the Prophet, peace be upon him, dressed

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[237] Reported by Tirmidhi, who said it is a *hasan sahih* hadith.

[238] Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi, who considers it a sound hadith.

Umm Khalid, a small girl, in a black woolen blanket and said to her,

«أبلي وأخلفي»

"May you live so long that you will wear out many garments." The Companions used to say,

«تبلي ويخلف الله»

"May you live so long that you wear out this garment and may Allah replace it with a better one."

On seeing 'Umar wearing some new clothes the Prophet, peace be upon him, said,

«البس جديداً وعش حميداً ومت شهيداً سعيداً»

"May you wear new clothes and may you live nobly and die as a happy martyr."[239]

On Discarding a Piece of Clothing

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The barrier between the eyes of the Jinn and the nakedness of the Children of Adam is [created] when a Muslim discards a garment and says,

«بسم الله الذي لا إله إلا هو»

'In the name of Allah besides Whom there is no other god'."[240]

On Leaving One's House

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When one of you leaves the house he should say,

«بسم الله توكلت على الله ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله»

'In the name of Allah, I put my trust in Allah. There is no power or strength except with Allah." To him is said, 'This is sufficient for you. You are protected, saved, and guided.' The devil leaves him alone, saying to another devil, 'How can you tackle a man who is guided, saved, and well protected'."[241]

A sound hadith reports the following supplication from Anas:

«بسم الله آمنت بالله ، اعتصمت بالله ، توكلت على الله ، لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله»

"In the name of Allah, I believe in Allah, and I seek protection of Allah. There is no power or strength except with Allah."[242]

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[239] Reported by Ibn Majah and Ibn As-Sinni.

[240] Ibn As-Sinni.

[241] Abu Daw'ud.

[242] Musnad Ahmad.

Umm Salmah reported that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, whenever left her apartment he would look up and then pray,

«اللهم إني إعوذ بك أن أضل أو أُضل أو أزل أو أُزل أو أظلم أو أُظلم أو أجهل أو يُجهل علي»

"O Allah, I seek Your refuge against going astray or leading others astray, slipping or causing others to slip, doing wrong or being wronged by others, and behaving arrogantly or being treated arrogantly by others."[243]

Prayers On Entering One's House

Jabir reported, "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying, 'If a man remembers Allah while entering his house and eating his meals, the devil says to his forces, "You will have no place to sleep or food to eat." But if the person fails to remember Allah while entering his house the devil says to them, "You have found the place to rest at night." And if he does not remember Allah while eating meals, the devil says, "You have found the place to rest and meals to eat".'"[244]

Abu Malik Al-Asha'ri reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When a man enters his house he should say,

«اللهم إني أسألك خير المولج وخير المخرج بسم الله ولجنا وبسم الله خرجنا وعلى الله ربنا توكلنا»

'O Allah, I seek of You the best of entrance and the best of departure. In the name of Allah we enter and in the name of Allah we go out, and we put our trust in Allah, our Lord,' and then he should greet his family."[245]

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said to him, "O son, when you enter your house say, 'As-Salamu Alaykum (peace be upon you).' It will bring blessing to you and to your family."[246]

On Seeing Something Pleasing About One's Own Property

On seeing something good and pleasing concerning one's family or property one should say, "Allah's will be done! There is no power or strength except with Allah."[247] And on seeing in them something unpleasant, he should say, "Praise and thanks be to Allah under all circumstances." Allah says in the Qur'an (18:39), "Why did you not say, as you went into your garden, 'Allah's Will be done! There is no power but with Allah!'"

Anas reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'If for every

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243 Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it a sound hadith.

244 Muslim.

245 Abu Daw'ud.

246 Tirmidhi.

247 Reported by Ibn As-Sinni.

blessing bestowed by Allah upon his servant in his family or property the servant says,

«ما شاء الله لا قوة إلا بالله»

"Allah's will be done! There is no power but with Allah," he will witness no misfortune concerning them except that of death'."[248]

It is reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, on seeing something good and pleasing used to say,

«الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات»

"Praise be to Allah with Whose blessings all good deeds are perfected." And when he saw something that displeased him, he would say,

«الحمد لله على كل حال»

"Praise and thanks be to Allah under all circumstances."[249]

On Looking into a Mirror

'Ali reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, looked into a mirror he would say,

«الحمد لله اللهم كما حسنت خَلقي فحسن خُلقي»

"Praise and thanks be to Allah. O Allah, make me good mannered as You made me good looking."[250]

Anas reported that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, looked at his face in the mirror, he would say,

«الحمد لله الذي سوى خَلقي فعدله ، وكرم صورة وجهي فحسنها وجعلني من المسلمين»

"Praise be to Allah Who fashioned my nature and gave it a perfect form, and Who honored my face and made it good, and made me one of the Muslims."

On Seeing Someone in Distress

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "If one sees an afflicted person and says,

«الحمد لله الذي عافاني مما ابتلاك به ، وفضلني على كثير ممن خلق تفضيلا»

'Praise and thanks be to Allah Who has saved me from what he has afflicted you with, and has honored me over many of His creatures,' he will be saved from that affliction."[251]

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[248] Reported by Ibn As-Sinni.

[249] Reported by Ibn Majah. Al-Hakim said, "The chain of this hadith is sound and its narrators are trustworthy.

[250] Reported by Ibn As-Sinni.

[251] Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it sound.

An-Nawawi states that the scholars said, "One should say the above mentioned supplication inaudibly so that the afflicted person should not hear it, lest he should be grieved by it. But if the affliction is the result of his sinful conduct then there is no harm in his listening if he is not heedful of evil."

On Hearing the Sound of a Cock, a Donkey, and a Dog

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Seek refuge with Allah against the devil when you hear the sound of a donkey, for it sees the devil, and when you hear a cock, pray to Allah for His bounty, for it sees an angel."[252]

Abu Daw'ud's version reads, "When you hear the barking of dogs and braying of donkeys during the night seek the refuge of Allah from them, for they see what you don't."

When the Wind Blows

Abu Hurairah reported, "I heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying, "The wind is a blessing from Allah. It brings mercy as well as punishment. So when you see it do not abuse it, and ask Allah for its good, and seek refuge with Allah against its evil'."[253]

'Aishah reported that whenever the wind blew, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would supplicate,

«اللهم إني أسألك خيرها وخير ما فيها وخير ما أرسلت به وأعوذ بك من شرها وشر ما أرسلت به»

"O Allah, I ask You for its good, and the good that is in it, and the good of what it is sent with, and I seek Your refuge against its evil, and the evil it is sent with."[254]

On Hearing Thunder

Ibn 'Umar reported that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard the sound of thunder or lightning he would say,

«اللهم لا تقتلنا بغضبك ، ولا تهلكنا بعذابك ، وعافنا قبل ذلك»

"O Allah, do not destroy us with Your wrath nor let us perish with Your punishment, and save us before it comes to pass."[255]

On Seeing the Moon

'Abdallah b.'Umar reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him,

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[252] Bukhari and Muslim.

[253] Reported by Abu Daw'ud with a sound chain of narrators.

[254] Muslim.

[255] Reported by Tirmidhi, by its chain of authorities is weak.

saw moon he would say.

«الله أكبر ، اللهم أهلّه علينا بالأمن والإيمان ، والسلامة والإسلام ، والتوفيق لما تحب وترضى ربنا وربك الله»

"Allah is the Greatest! O Allah, make it shine upon us in peace, faith, security, safety, and with the power to do what You love and are pleased with! O moon! Your Lord and our Lord is Allah."[256]

Qatadah reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, saw the moon, he would say,

«هلال خير ورشد ، هلال خير ورشد ، آمنت بالله الذي خلقك»

"You are the new moon of goodness and guidance, the new moon of goodness and guidance. I believe in Allah Who created you." He said this three times. And then he would add,

«الحمد لله الذي ذهب بشهر كذا وجاء بشهر كذا»

"Praise be to Allah Who caused such and such month to go by in this manner and brought another month (which he named)." This is reported by Abu Daw'ud.

Supplications of Sorrow and Grief

Ibn 'Abbas reported, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, at times of sorrow and grief used to supplicate,

«لا إله إلا الله العظيم الحليم ، لا إله إلا الله رب العرش العظيم ، لا إله إلا الله رب السموات ورب الأرض ، ورب العرش الكريم»

La iliha illa Allah Al-'Azim, Al-'Alim, la ilaha illa Allah, Rabbul'arshil 'Azim, la ilaha illa Allahu, Rabbus-Samawati wa rabbul ardi wa rabbul 'arshi karim (There is no god but Allah, the Mighty, the Forbearing, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the mighty throne, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and the Lord of the throne of honor)'." This is reported by Bukhari and Muslim.

Anas said that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, was faced with a serious difficulty, he would always supplicate,

«يا حي يا قيوم برحمتك أستغيث»

"*Ya Hayyu, ya Qayyumu, bi-rahmatika astaghithu* (O the Living, O the Eternal, I seek help in Your grace).[257]

Abu Hurairah reported that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, was faced with a serious difficulty, he would raise his head to the sky and supplicate,

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[256] At-Tabarani.

[257] Tirmidhi.

"*Subhan-Allah al-'Azim* «سبحان الله العظيم»
(glory be to Allah, the Mighty)." And when he implored seriously and strongly, he would say,

«يا حي يا قيوم»

"*Ya Hayyu, Ya Qayyum* (O the Living, the Eternal One)."[258]

Abu Bakrah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The supplications of distress are,

«اللهم رحمتك أرجو ، فلا تكلني إلى نفسي طرفة عين ، وأصلح لي شأني كله ، لا إله إلا أنت»

'*Allahumma rahmataka arju, fala takilni ila nafsi tarfata 'ain, wa aslah li sha'ni kullahu, la ilaha illa anta* (O Allah, I hope for Your mercy, so give me not over to my self even for as little as wink of an eye, and set right all my affairs, there is no god but You)."[259]

Asma, daughter of 'Amais, reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked her, "Shall I tell you words that you may say in times of pain or distress. These are,

«الله الله ربي لا أشرك به شيئاً»

'*Allah, Allah, Rabbi la ushriku bihi shai'an* (Allah, Allah, my Lord, I associate none with Him)." Another narration says that these words should be said seven times.[260]

Sa'd ibn Waqas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The supplication made by the Companion of the Fish (Prophet Yunus) in the belly of the fish was, «لا إله إلا أنت سبحانك إني كنت من الظالمين»

'*La ilaha illa anta, subhanaka, inni kuntu minaz-zalimin* (there is no god but You, You are far exalted and above all weaknesses, and I was indeed the wrongdoer)'. If any Muslim supplicates in these words, his supplication will be accepted." In another report we read, "I know words that will cause Allah to remove one's distress. These are the words (of supplication) of my brother Yunus, peace be upon him,."[261]

Ibn Mas'ud reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If any servant of Allah afflicted with distress or grief makes this supplication, his supplication will be accepted:

«اللهم إني عبدك ابن عبدك ابن أمتك ناصيتي بيدك ، ماض في حكمك ، عدل في قضاؤك ، أسألك بكل اسم هو لك سميت به نفسك ، أو أنزلته في كتابك ، أو علمته أحداً من خلقك ، أو استأثرت به في علم الغيب عندك ، أن تجعل القرآن ربيع قلبي ، ونور صدري ، وجلاء حزني ، وذهاب همي»

'O Allah, I am Your servant, son of Your servant, son of your maidservant. My forehead is in Your hand. Your command concerning me prevails, and Your

258 Tirmidhi

259 Abu Daw'ud

260 Abu Daw'ud

261 Tirmidhi

decision concerning me is just. I call upon You by every one of the beautiful names by which You have described Yourself, or which You have revealed in Your book, or have taught anyone of Your creatures, or which You have chosen to keep in the knowledge of the unseen with You, to make the Qur'an the delight of my heart, the light of my breast, and remover of my griefs, sorrows, and afflictions'." A supplication in these words will be answered. Allah will remove one's affliction and replace it with joy and happiness.[262]

On Encountering the Enemy, and When One is Afraid of the Ruler

Abu Musa narrated that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, feared a people, he used to supplicate against them in these words,

«اللهم إنا نجعلك في نحورهم ، ونعوذ بك من شرورهم»

"O Allah, we request you to kill them and we seek Your protection against their evil."[263]

Ibn As-Sinni reported that in a battle the Prophet, peace be upon him, supplicated,

«يا مالك يوم الدين إياك أعبد وإياك أستعين»

"O Master of the Day of Judgment, I worship You alone, and seek only Your help." Anas remarked, "I saw the angels fighting against his enemies and defeating them left and right."

It is also reported from Ibn 'Umar that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When you are afraid of a ruler or someone else, you should say,

«لا إله إلا الله الحليم الكريم سبحان الله ربي ، سبحان الله رب السموات السبع ورب العرش العظيم ، لا إله إلا أنت عز جارك وجل ثناؤك»

'There is no god but Allah, the Forbearing, the Gracious. Glory be to Allah, my Lord, glory be to Allah, the Lord of the seven heavens and of the mighty throne. There is no god but You, strong is your protection, and great is Your praise'."

Ibn 'Abbas said, «حسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل» "*Hasbuna-Allah wa ni'am al-wakil* (Allah suffices us for everything and He is the most excellent guardian)," and then he added, "These words were uttered by the Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, when he was thrown into the fire, and the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said these words when the people informed him, 'The people have gathered against you'."[264]

'Awf b. Malik reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, judged the case of two men. The one who lost the case, turning away to go, said, "Allah

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[262] Reported by Ahmad and Ibn Hibban.
[263] Abu Daw'ud and Nasa'i.
[264] Bukhari.

is sufficient for us, and He is the best guardian." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to him, "Allah disapproves of weakness and impotence. You must put in effort and work, but if you are overwhelmed by a difficulty then say, 'Allah is sufficient for me, and he is the most excellent guardian'."

When One is Confronted with a Difficult Situation

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to supplicate,

«اللهم لا سهل إلا ما جعلته سهلاً وأنت تجعل الحزن سهلاً»

"O Allah, there is no ease except what You make easy, and you alone can turn a difficulty into ease."[265]

When One is Destitute

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When you leave your house and are afflicted with hardship, why don't you pray,

«بسم الله على نفسي ومالي وديني ، اللهم رضني بقضائك ، وبارك لي فيما قُدّر حتى لا أحب تعجيل ما أخرت ولا تأخير ما عجلت»

'In the name of Allah respecting myself, my property, and my *din*. O Allah, cause me to be satisfied and pleased with Your decree, and bless me in whatis decreed for me, so that I will not want to hasten what You have delayed, nor to delay what You have hastened'."[266]

When One is in Debt

'Ali related that a slave, who had agreed on terms of his freedom with his master, came to him and said, "I cannot pay my master as I agreed in the terms of freedom, so help me." 'Ali said to him, "Let me teach you the supplication that the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught me. If you say it, Allah will cause your debt to be paid even if it be as great as a mountain. Say,

«اللهم اكفني بحلالك عن حرامك ، وأغنني بفضلك عمن سواك»

'O Allah, make Your lawful bounties sufficient for me so as to save me from what is unlawful, and from Your grace grant me sufficient abundance to make me free from the need of all except You'."[267]

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported, "One day the Prophet, peace beupon him, entered the mosque. He saw there a man from the Ansar called Abu Umamah. He asked, 'What is the matter with you that I see you sitting in the mosque when it is not the time of prayer.' He replied, 'I am very much worried and

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[265] Ibn As-Sinni.

[266] Ibn As-Sinni.

[267] Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it sound.

in great debt, O Messenger of Allah!' The Prophet said, 'Let me teach you words to say so that Allah will remove your worries and settle your debt?' He exclaimed, 'Of course, O, Messenger of Allah.' The Prophet said, 'Say in morning and evening,

«اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الهم والحزن وأعوذ بك من العجز والكسل وأعوذ بك من الجبن والبخل وأعوذ بك من غلبة الدين وقهر الرجال»

"O Allah, I seek refuge in You from all worry and grief. I seek refuge in You from incapacity and slackness. I seek refuge in You from cowardice and niggardliness, and I seek refuge in You from being overcome by debt and being subjected to men".' The man said, 'When I did that, Allah removed all my worries and settled my debt'."[268]

When One is Faced with Something Difficult or Unpleasant

Abu Hurairah related that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When one of you is afflicted with any misfortune he should say,

«إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون»

'Ina li llahi wa inna 'ilayhi Raji'un (We are for Allah, and to Him is our return),' even if it be merely losing one's shoe straps, for this is also a misfortune."[269]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "A strong believer is better and dearer to Allah than a weak believer, and there is good in everyone, but cherish what gives you benefit in the Hereafter and seek help from Allah and do not lose heart, and if anything (in the form of trouble) comes to you, don't say, 'If I had not done that, such and such thing would not have happened,' but say,

«قدر الله وما شاء فعل»

'Allah has ordained it so, and whatever He pleases He does, because 'ifs' and 'buts' open the door for Satan."[270]

What to Say When One is Struck by Doubt

Abu Hurairah reported that Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said, "Satan comes to you and says, 'Who created so-and-so, until finally he says, 'Who created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a doubt, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts."[271]

Another *sahih* hadith reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said,

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[268] Abu Daw'ud.
[269] Ibn As-Sinni.
[270] Muslim.
[271] Bukhari and Muslim.

"The people will continue raising questions until they ask, 'Allah created the creation, but who created Allah?' So whoever is faced with such a situation should say, 'I believe in Allah and His messengers'."

When One is Angry

Sulaiman b. Sard said, "I was sitting with the Prophet, peace be upon him, when two men abused each other and one of them became so angry that his face became swollen and changed. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'I know a word that that will cause him to relax, and this is,

«أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم»

"I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed." (If he said these words) his anger will cool down'."[272]

Some Comprehensive Supplications

'Aishah says that the Prophet, peace be upon him, loved the short but comprehensive, meaningful supplications, more than others. We give below some of these supplications, which are a must for every believer.

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, frequently prayed,

«اللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار»

"O Allah, give us all the good of this world, and the good of the life hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the fire."

The Prophet, peace be upon him, visited one of the Muslims who had become as feeble as a chicken, and inquired about his health. Allah's Messenger, peace be him, asked, "Did you supplicate Allah for anything or beg Him for it?" He replied, "Yes, I asked in these words, 'O, God punish me in this world with the punishment that You are going to inflict on me in the Hereafter'." Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, remarked, "Hallowed be Allah! You have neither the power nor the forbearance to take upon yourself the burden of Allah's punishment. Why did you not say this, 'O Allah, grant us all the good of the world, and all the good of the Hereafter, and save us from the torment of the fire?'" Then the Prophet, peace be upon him, made this supplication for him and he was all right.[273]

Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas heard his son praying, "O Allah, I ask You for Paradise and its blessings and its pleasure, and for such-and-such, and such-and-such. I seek refuge in You from Hell, from its chains, from its collars, and from such-and-such, and from such-and-such." At this Sa'd said, "You have asked Allah for a lot of good, and sought His refuge from a lot of evil. I heard Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, saying, 'There will be people who will

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[272] Muslim and Bukhari.

[273] Muslim.

exaggerate in supplication. For you it is sufficient to say,

«اللهم إني أسألك من الخير كله ما علمت منه وما لم أعلم وأعوذ بك من الشر كله ما علمت منه وما لم أعلم»

"O Allah, I seek from You all the good, whether I know it or I do not know it, and I seek Your refuge from all the evil, whether I know it or I do not know it.''''"274

'Abdallah ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, prayed to Allah,

«رب أعني ولا تعن علي ، وانصرني ولا تنصر علي ، وامكر لي ولا تمكر علي ، واهدني ويسر الهدى لي وانصرني على من بغى علي ، رب اجعلني لك شكاراً ، لك ذكاراً ، لك رهاباً ، لك مطواعاً ، لك مخبتاً أواهاً إليك منيباً ، رب تقبل توبتي ، واغسل حوبتي ، وأجب دعوتي ، وثبت حجتي ، وسدد لساني واهد قلبي ، واسلل سخيمة صدري»

"My Lord, help me and do not turn against me. Grant me victory, and do not grant victory over me. Plan on my behalf and do not plan against me. Guide me, and make the guidance easy for me. Grant me victory over those who act wrongfully toward me. O Allah, make me grateful to You, mindful of You, in awe of You, devoted to your obedience, humble, penitent, and ever turning to You in repentance. My Lord, accept my repentance, wash away my sins, answer my supplication, clearly establish my evidence, guide my heart, make my tongue true, and draw out malice from my breast."

Zaid ibn Arqam said, "I am not going to say anything except what Allah's Messenger, may peace be upon him, used to say. He used to supplicate,

«اللهم إني أعوذ بك من العجز والكسل والجبن والبخل والهرم ، وعذاب القبر ، اللهم آت نفسي تقواها ، زكها أنت خير من زكاها ، إنك وليها ومولاها ، اللهم إني أعوذ بك من علم لا ينفع ، ومن قلب لا يخشع ، ومن نفس لا تشبع ومن دعوة لا يستجاب لها»

'O Allah, I seek refuge in You from incapacity, from sloth, from cowardice, from miserliness, from old age, and from the torment of the grave. O Allah, grant my soul righteousness, and purify it, for You are the Best Purifier. You are the Protecting friend, and Guardian. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the knowledge that does not benefit, from a heart that does not fear You, from a soul that is uncontented. and from supplication to which You do not respond."275

The Prophet, peace be upon him, exclaimed to his Companions, "O people, would you like to be serious in your supplications?" They replied, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger." He said, "Then ask Him,

«اللهم أعنا على ذكرك وشكرك وحسن عبادتك»

'O Allah, help us in rememebring You, in offering thanks to You, and in

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274 Ahmad and Nasa'i.

275 Muslim.

worshipping You properly'."[276]

Ahmad reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, advised: "Recite frequently,

«يا ذا الجلال والإكرام»

"*Ya dha al-jalali w al-ikram* (O, Possessor of Majesty and sublimity)'".

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also used to say,

«يا مقلب القلوب ثبت قلبي على دينك»

"O Controller of the Hearts, make my heart firm in Your faith. The balance is in the hands of the Beneficent, the Exalted, the Mighty, and He honors some and brings others low thereby.[277]

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to supplicate,

«اللهم إني أعوذ بك من زوال نعمتك وتحول عافيتك ، وفجاة نقمتك وجميع سخطك»

"O Allah, I seek refuge in You against deprivation of Your bounties, against loosing Your security, against the suddenness of Your wrath, and against everything that might cause Your anger."

The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to say,

«اللهم انفعني بما علمتني ، وعلمني ما ينفعني ، وزدني علماً ، والحمد لله على كل حال ، وأعوذ بالله من حال أهل النار»

"O Allah, benefit me with what You have taught me, and teach me what is beneficial for me, and increase me in knowledge. Thanks be to Allah under all circumstances, and I seek Allah's refuge from the plight of the people of the fire."[278]

When (his daughter) Fatimah came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, asking him to give her a servant, he said, "Say,

«اللهم رب السموات السبع ورب العرش العظيم ، ربنا ورب كل شيء ، منزل التوراة والإنجيل والقرآن ، فالق الحب والنوى ، أعوذ بك من شر كل شيء أنت آخذ بناصيته ، أنت الأول فليس قبلك شيء وأنت الآخر فليس بعدك شيء ، وأنت الظاهر فليس فوقك شيء ، وأنت الباطن فليس دونك شيء اقض عني الدين وأغنني من الفقر»

'O Allah, the Lord of the seven heavens, and the magnificent throne, our Lord and the Lord of all things, the Revealer of the Torah, Injil, and the Qur'an, The Splitter and Grower of the seed grain and date stone, I seek Your refuge against the evil of all things that You hold under Your control. You are the First, there is nothing before You. You are the Last, and there is nothing after You. You are the Manifest and there is nothing above You, You are Innermost and there

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[276] Al-Hakim.

[277] Ahmad.

[278] At-Tirmidhi.

is nothing beyond You. Remove the burden of debt from us and relieve us from want'."[279]

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also used to supplicate,

«اللهم إني أسألك الهدى والتقى والعفاف والغنى»

"O Allah, I beseech You for guidance, virtuousness, chastity, and detachment from the world."

'Abdallah Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, seldom left an assembly without using these supplications for his Companions:

«اللهم اقسم لنا من خشيتك ما تحول به بيننا وبين معصيتك ، ومن طاعتك ما تبلغنا به جنتك ، ومن اليقين ما تهون به علينا مصائب الدنيا ، ومتعنا بأسماعنا وأبصارنا وقوتنا ما أحييتنا ، واجعله الوارث منا ، واجعل ثأرنا على من ظلمنا وانصرنا على من عادانا ، ولا تجعل مصيبتنا في ديننا ، ولا تجعل الدنيا أكبر همنا ، ولا مبلغ علمنا ، ولا تسلط علينا من لا يرحمنا»

"O Allah, apportion to us the fear of You that will stand between us and acts of disobedience to You, and the obedience to You that will bring us to Your Paradise, and the certainty sufficient for You to make the calamities of this world easy for us. Grant us enjoyment of our hearing, our sight, and our power as long as You grant us life, and do the same for those who inherit from us. Grant us victory over those who have wronged us and help us against those who are hostile to us. Let no calamity befall our *din*, do not let worldly affairs become our greatest concern or all that we know about, and do not let those rule over us who do not show us mercy."[280]

Invoking Blessings on the Prophet

Allah says, "Allah and His angels send blessings to the Prophet, O you who believe! Send blessings to him, and salute him with all respect."[281]

What is Meant by Invoking Blessings on the Prophet?

Abual-'Aliyah said, "Allah's sending blessings to the Prophet, peace be upon him, means that He praises him in front of the angels, and the blessings of angels mean their supplications invoking blessings on the Prophet.[282] Sufian Al-Thawri and other scholars said, "Blessings of the Lord mean His mercy, and the blessings of the angels refer to their supplications and seeking forgiveness."[283] Commenting on the Qur'anic verse 33:56, Ibn Kathir said, "In this verse Allah, the Exalted, informed His servants about the revered status that

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[279] Muslim

[280] Reported by Tirmidhi, who considers it a sound hadith.

[281] Qur'an 33:56.

[282] Bukhari.

[283] Tirmidhi.

His Prophet and servant occupies with Him in the higher assembly. He revealed that He praises him in the company of the angels close to Him, and that the angels pray for him, and that He has commanded the inhabitants of the lower world to send their salutations and greetings to the Prophet, so that the lower and the higher worlds would join together in his praise.

On this subject there are many ahadith. Some of these are given below:

Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-'As reported that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying, "If anyone invokes blessings upon me once, Allah will bestow blessings upon him ten times over."[284]

Ibn Mas'ud reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The people nearest to me on the Day of Judgment will be the ones most conscientious in invoking blessings upon me." Tirmidhi reported this hadith, and he considers it a sound hadith. The words "nearest to me" here mean the ones most deserving of the Prophet's intercession and nearest to him in station.

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Do not turn my grave into a site of festivities, but send greetings to me for your greetings are raised to me wherever you might be."[285]

Aus reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The best of your days is Friday, so send more and more greetings to me on it, for your greetings are presented to me." They asked, "How are our greetings presented to you while you are dead and your body is turned into dust?" He replied, "Allah has forbidden the earth to consume the bodies of the prophets."[286]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When any Muslim sends greetings to me, Allah returns my soul to me so that I may respond to his greetings."[287]

Ahmad recorded that Abu Talha Al Ansari said, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, woke up one day cheerful and beaming. His companions exclaimed, 'O Prophet of Allah, you woke up today cheerful and beaming.' He replied, 'Yes! A messenger of Allah, the Mighty and the Glorified, came to me and said, "If anyone from your ummah sends you a salutation, Allah will record for him ten good deeds, wipe off ten of his sins, and raise him thereby ten degrees in rank, and He will return his salutation with a similar salutation".' Ibn Kathir considers this a sound hadith.

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever desires to be given (his reward) in full measure, should send salutations to us — the members of my family — and should say,

«اللهم صل على محمد النبي وأزواجه أمهات المؤمنين وذريته وأهل بيته كما صليت على آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد»

'O Allah, shower blessings upon Muhammad, the Prophet, his wives, the mothers of the believers, his descendants, and the members of his family, as

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284 Muslim

285 Reported by Abu Daw'ud with a sound chain of authorities.

286 Abu Daw'ud and Nasa'i.

287 Reported by Abu Daw'ud with a sound chain of authorities.

you showered blessings upon the family of Ibrahim. You are the Praiseworthy and Glorious."[288]

Abu ibn Ka'ab said, "When two-thirds of the night had passed, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would get up and say, 'O people, remember Allah, remember Allah. The great commotion has come, followed by more commotions. Death has come with all that it has in store. Death has come with all that it has in store.' I said, 'O messenger of Allah, I invoke blessings to you a great deal. How much of my prayer should I reserve for invoking [such] blessings upon you?' The Prophet replied, 'Whatever you want.' I asked, 'A quarter of it?' He said, 'Whatever you wish. If you increase it, that would be better for you.' I asked, 'Half of it?' He repeated, 'Whatever you wish, but if you increase it, that would be better for you.' I asked, 'Two-thirds of it?' He said, 'Whatever you wish. If you increase it, that would be better for you.' I said, 'I devote my whole prayer to invoking blessings on you (i.e. I pray for you wherever I am).' He concluded, 'Thus will you be relieved of your anxiety, and your sins forgiven'."[289]

Sending Salutations to the Prophet on Hearing His Name Is this Obligatory?

Some Muslim scholars hold that it is obligatory to send salutations to the Prophet, i.e. invoke blessings upon him, each time one hears his name mentioned. They, like Al-Tahawi and Al-Halimi, base their argument on a hadith recorded by Tirmidhi, which he grades as sound, from Abu Hurairah, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "May the nose of the person in whose presence I am mentioned be covered with dirt if he does not invoke blessings upon me. And let the nose of that person be smeared with dust who finds the month of Ramadan but lets it come to an end without securing pardon for himself. And may the nose of the person be smeared with dust whose aged parents, both of them or one of them, are still living, and who fails them (i.e. by serving them) to enter Paradise."[290]

In a report related by Abu Dharr we read, "the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'The most miserly among people is the one who fails to invoke blessings upon me when my name is mentioned in his or her presence'."

Other scholars are of the opinion that invoking Allah's blessings upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, only once while in a gathering is obligatory. After that it is no longer necessary, though it is preferred to do so. This is based on a hadith from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If some people sitting together in an assembly do not remember Allah in it, nor invoke Allah's blessings upon His Prophet, peace be upon him, they will be sorry on the Day of Judgment. Allah may either punish them or forgive them."[291]

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[288] Related by Abu Daw'ud and Nasa'i.
[289] Related by Tirmidhi.
[290] Related by Tirmidhi, who said it is an authentic hadith.
[291] Tirmidhi.

Invoking Allah's Blessings Upon the Prophet when Writing his Name

The scholars hold it desirable to invoke Allah's blessings upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, each time one writes his name. But this is not mentioned in any hadith, so none can be used to support this view. Al Khatib al-Baghdadi said, "I saw the handwriting of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and I found that often he wrote the name of the Prophet, peace be upon him, without invoking Allah's blessings upon him." Then he added, "It has come to my knowledge that he used to invoke Allah's blessings upon the Prophet verbally."

An-Nawawi said, "When invoking Allah's blessings upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, we should combine prayers for peace and blessings upon him (by saying

«صلى الله عليه وسلم»

Salalahu 'alaihi was sallam), and should not confine it to one of these saying either *Sallahu 'alaihi* (May Allah shower His blessings upon him) or *'Alaihi as-salaam* (peace be upon him)'."

Invoking Blessings Upon the Prophets

It is preferred to invoke Allah's blessings upon the Prophets and angels separately. As to others than the Prophets, there is consensus among scholars that Allah's blessings may be invoked for them along with others (but not separately). The statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him, has been cited above, "O Allah invoke blessings on Muhammad, the Prophet, and his wives, the mothers of the believers ..." It is disliked, however, to invoke blessings for them on their own. For instance, one should not say, "Umar, may Allah shower His blessings upon him."

How to Invoke Blessings and Peace Upon the Prophet

Abu Mas'ud Al-Ansari reported the following account from Bashir ibn Sa'd: "I asked Prophet, peace be upon him, 'O Messenger of Allah, Allah has commanded us to invoke blessings upon you. How should we do it?' The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, remained silent until we wished we had not asked him. Then he told us to say,

«اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على آل إبراهيم ، وبارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على آل إبراهيم في العالمين إنك حميد مجيد»

'Allahumma salli 'ala muhammadin wa 'ala ali muhammadin kama sallayta 'ala ali ibrahima wa barik 'ala muhammadin wa 'ala ali muhammadin kama barakta 'ala ibrahima wa 'ala ali ibrahima fil 'alamin, innaka hammidum majeed (O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed the family of Ibrahim, and give *baraka* to Muhammad and the family

of Muhammad as You gave *baraka* to the family of Ibrahim, in all the worlds. You are worthy of Praise and Glorious), and then he told us to give the *taslim* as you have learned it."[292]

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said, "When you invoke blessings upon the Prophet do it in the best manner, because you don't know whether or not your blessings may be presented to him. The Companions asked him to teach them how to do it. He replied, 'Say, "*Allahumma 'ij' al salawataka wa rahmataka wa barakataka 'ala sayyidil mursalin, wa imamal mutaqadimin wa khatimin nabiyyin muhammadin 'abduka wa rasuluka imamal khair wa qaidil khair wa rasulir rahmati. Allahumma b'athu maqaman yaghbatuhu bihil awalun. Allahumma salli 'ala muhammadin wa 'ala ali muhammadin kama sallaita 'ala ibrahima wa ali ibrahima innaka hamidum majeed. Allahumma barik 'ala muhammadin wa 'ala ali muhammadin kama barakta 'ala ibrahima wa 'ala ali ibrahima innak hamidum majeed* (O Allah, shower Your blessings, mercy, and favors on the Chief of the Messengers, and the Chief of the Foremost, the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, Your servant and Your Messenger, the leader of the virtuous, the chief of the virtuous, the Messenger of Mercy, grant him a station that is the happy goal of the most excellent, O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family as You blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious. O Allah, give baraka to Muhammad and his family as you gave *baraka* to Ibrahim and his family, You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious"'."[293]

Going on a Journey

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Travel and be sound in health, and fight (in the cause of Allah) and be enriched."[294]

Leaving One's House for What is Dear to Allah

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "No one leaves his home without two banners waiting at his door, one of them in the hands of an angel and the other in the hands of a devil. If he intends to do what pleases Allah the angel will follow him with his standard, and he will remain under the banner of the angel until he returns to his house, but if he sets out for what displeases Allah the devil with his banner will follow him about, and he will remain under the devil's banner until he returns to his house."[295]

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[292] Muslim.

[293] Ibn Majah.

[294] Ahmad. Almanawi considers this a sound hadith.

[295] Ahmad and At-Tabarani. Its chain of authorities is sound.

Consultation and *Istikharah* Before Setting out on a Journey[296]

A traveller should consult good righteous persons before setting out on a journey, because Allah says, "And consult them (O Prophet) in affairs (of moment)," (Qur'an 3:159) and one of the characteristics of the believers is that "they (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation" (Qur'an 42:38).

Qatadah said, "Every people who seek the pleasure of Allah and consult with one another are guided to the best course in their affairs."

The traveller should also make *istikharah* and seek guidance from Allah. Sa'd ibn Waqas reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "*Istikharah* (seeking guidance from Allah) is one of the distinct favors (of Allah) upon man, and a good fortune for the son of Adam is to be pleased with the judgment of Allah. And a misfortune of the son of Adam is his failure to make *istikharah* (seeking Allah's guidance), and a misfortune for the son of Adam is his displeasure with the judgment of Allah." Ibn Taimiyyah said, "He who seeks guidance from the Creator and consults the creatures will never regret it."

How to make *Istikharah*

For this purpose one should pray two non-obligatory raka'at of prayer, even if they are of the regular sunnah prayers or a prayer for entering the mosque, and so on, during any time of the day or night. One should recite in them whatever one wishes of the Qur'an, after reciting *al-Fatihah*. Then one should praise Allah and invoke blessings upon the Prophet, peace be upon him. After this one should supplicate to Allah with the following supplication, which Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah has reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him, when he related, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, taught us how to make *Istikharah* in all (our) affairs, just as he taught us various surahs of the Qur'an. He told us, 'If anyone of you considers doing something he should offer a-two-rak'at prayer other than the obligatory prayers, and then say (after the prayer),

«اللهم إني أستخيرك بعلمك وأستقدرك بقدرتك وأسألك من فضلك العظيم ، فإنك تقدر ولا أقدر ، وتعلم ولا أعلم ، وأنت علام الغيوب ؛ اللهم إن كنت تعلم أن هذا الأمر خير لي في ديني ومعاشي وعاقبة أمري ، أو قال ـ عاجل أمري وآجله ـ فاقدره لي ، ويسره لي ، ثم بارك لي فيه. وإن كنت تعلم أن هذا الأمر شر لي ، في ديني ومعاشي وعاقبة أمري ، أو قال ـ عاجل أمري وآجله ـ فاصرفه عني واصرفني عنه ، واقدر لي الخير حيث كان ، ثم ارضني به»

"Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, wa as'aluka min fadlika al-azim fa-innaka taqdiru wala aqdiru, wa ta'lamu wala a'lamu, wa anta 'allamu-l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha-l-amra khairun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa aqibati amri (or 'ajili amri wa'ajilihi) f'aqdirhu li wa yas-sirhu li thumma barik li fihi, wa in kunta ta'llamu anna

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[296] *Istikhara* (Arabic) means to ask Allah to guide one to the right thing concerning any affair in one's life, especially when one has to choose between two permissible alternatives.

hadha-l-amra sharrun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa-aqibati amri (or fi' ajili amri wa ajilihi) fasrifhu anni was-rifni' anhu. Wa aqdir li al-khaira haithu kana thumma ardini bihi (O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, and Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this thing is good for my *din* and my subsistence and for my Hereafter — (or say, If it is better for my present and later needs) — then ordain it for me and make it easy for me to obtain, and then bless me in it. If You know that this thing is harmful to me in my *din* and subsistence and in the Hereafter — (or say, If it is worse for my present and later needs) — then keep it away from me, and keep me away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me, and make me satisfied with it).'" The Prophet, may peace be upon him, added that then the person should mention his need."

There is nothing authentic concerning anything specific that is to be recited in the prayer nor is there any authentic report concerning how many times one should repeat it.

An-Nawawi holds that "after making *istikharah*, a person must do what he is wholeheartedly inclined to do and feels good about doing and should not insist on doing what he had desired to do before making the *istikharah*. And if his feelings change, he should leave what he had intended to do, for otherwise he is not leaving the choice to Allah, and would not be honest in seeking aid from Allah's power and knowledge. Sincerity in seeking Allah's choice, means that one should completely abandon what one desired oneself."

Travelling on Thursday is Preferred

Bukhari reports that the Prophet, peace be upon him, seldom set out on a journey except on Thursday.

Offering Two Raka'at Before the Journey

Al-Mut'am ibn al-Miqdam reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "No one leaves anything behind with his family better than the two raka'at of prayers that he offers with them while intending to go on a journey."[297]

It is Preferred to have Companions for the Journey

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, forbade loneliness, i.e., that a man should sleep alone at night, or go on a journey alone.[298]

Umar ibn Shu'aib reported from his father and he from his grandfather that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "A single horseman (traveller) is a devil, two are two devils, but three are a caravan."

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[297] At-Tabarani and Ibn 'Asakir as a *mursal* hadith.

[298] Ahmad.

Bidding Farewell to One's Relatives, Asking them for Prayers, and Praying for Them

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Anyone intending to go on a journey should say to those staying behind,

«أستودعكم الله الذي لا تضيع ودائعه»

'I commend you to Allah Whose trusts are never lost'."[299]

'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When something is entrusted to the care of Allah, He guards it."[300]

It is reported from Abu Huraraih that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "When one of you intends to go on a journey, he should bid farewell to his brothers, for Allah will make their prayers a means of good."

It is sunnah that the members of the family, as well as the friends and those who see the traveller off should pray for him as in the following prayer transmitted from the Prophet.

Salim reported that when someone wanted to leave for a journey 'Ibn Umar would say to him, "Come over to me so that I may bid you farewell as the Prophet, peace upon him, used to bid us farewell," and that he used to say,

«استودع الله دينك ، وأمانتك ، وخواتيم عملك»

"To Allah I commend your *din* (Islam),[301] your trust,[302] and the conclusion of your deeds."'

In another report we read that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, bid farewell to a man he would hold his hand and would not leave it until the man himself dropped the Prophet's hand. The rest of the hadith is similar to the one given above. Tirmidhi considers this a sound (*hasan sahih*) hadith.

Anas reported that a man came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, "O Allah's Messenger, I intend to go on a journey, so please give me provision for the journey." The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied,

«زودك الله التقوى»

"May Allah provide you with piety (*taqwa*)." The man said, "Give me some more provision." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said,

«وغفر ذنبك»

"And may Allah forgive your sins." The man said, "Give me still more." The Prophet, peace be upon him, then replied,

«ويسر لك الخير حيثما كنت»

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[299] Ibn As-Sinni.

[300] Ahmad.

[301] Especially one's formal duties of worship, because in the hustle and bustle of the journey one may forget or neglect them.

[302] That is his family, those he leaves behind, and his property.

"And may Allah facilitate good for you wherever you may be." Tirmidhi considers this a sound hadith.[303]

Abu Hurairah reported that a man said to the Prophet, peace be upon him,, "O Allah's Messenger, I intend to proceed on a journey, so give me some advice." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to him, "Fear Allah, the Mighty and the Exalted, and glorify Him on every elevated piece of ground." When the man turned away to go, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said,

«اللهم اطو له البعد وهون عليه السفر»

"O Allah, make the distance short for him, and make his journey easy for him." Tirmidhi considers this a sound hadith.

Asking the Traveller "Pray for Us"

'Umar ibn al-Khattab reports, "I sought permission of the Prophet, peace be upon him, to perform 'umrah. He gave me permission and said, 'My brother, do not forget me in your prayers'." 'Umar reported further, "This was a word more pleasing to me than the entire wealth of the world."[304]

Supplications for a Journey

It is preferred for a traveller to say when leaving home,

«بسم الله توكلت على الله ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله ؛ اللهم إني أعوذ بك أن أضل أو أُضل ، أو أزل أو أُزل ، أو أظلم أو أُظلم ، أو أجهل أو يُجهل عليَّ»

"Bismillahi tawakaltu 'alallah wa la haula wala quwwata illa billah, Allahumma inni audhu bika an adilla au udalla au azilla au uzalla au azlima au uzlama au aj-hala au yuj-hala 'alayya (In the name of Allah, I repose my trust in Allah, and there is neither power nor any might except with Allah. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from leading others astray or being led astray, causing others to slip or being caused to slip by others, or doing wrong or be wronged by others, or behaving foolishly or being treated foolishly by others)." The traveller may choose whatever he wants from the supplications reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him. Some of these supplications are given below.

Ibn 'Abbas reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, proceeded on journey, he would say,

«اللهم أنت الصاحب في السفر ، والخليفة في الأهل ؛ اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الضبنة في السفر ، والكآبة في المنقلب ؛ اللهم اطو لنا الأرض ، وهون علينا السفر»

"O Allah, You are the Companion in the journey, and the One Who looks after the family. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from worthless companions on the journey, and from finding harm when I return, O Allah, make the length of the

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303 Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi, who considers it to be a sound, *hasan sahih*, hadith.

304 Reported by Abu Daw'ud and Tirmidhi, who holds it to be a sound hadith.

journey short for us, and the journey easy for us." And when he returned he would say,

«آيبون تائبون عابدون لربنا حامدون»

"We are returning repentant, worshipping our Lord and praising Him." And when he went to his family he would say,

«توباً توباً لربنا أوباً : لا يغادر علينا حوباً»

"Repentant, repentant, we return to our Lord, the sin visits us not."[305]

Abdullah ibn Sarjis reported that when Allah's Messenger, may peace be upon him, set forth on a journey, he would say,

«اللهم إني أعوذ بك من وعثاء السفر وكآبة المنقلب والحور بعد الكور ، ودعوة المظلوم ، وسوء المنظر في المال والأهل»

"O Allah, I seek refuge (with You) from the hardships of the journey and finding evil changes on my return, and disgrace after honor, and the curse of the oppressed, and a sad disarray in my property and family." And when he returned he would use similar words, except that he would mention his family before his property, and would say "... a sad disarray in my family and property."[306]

What a Traveller Should Say on Riding

'Ali ibn Rabi'a reported that a riding animal was brought for 'Ali to ride. When he put his foot in the stirrups he said, "In the name of Allah." When he was seated on it he said, "Glory to Him Who has subjected this (means of transportation) to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord, surely, must we return."[307] Then he praised Allah three times, and glorified Him (i.e. said *Allahu akbar*), and then said, *"Subhanaka la ilaha illa ant, qad zalamtu nafsi, faghfirli, innahu la yaghfiru dhunuba illa anta* (Glory to You (O Allah), there is no god but You, I have indeed wronged my soul, so forgive me, verily none can forgive sins except You)." Then he laughed, whereupon I asked him, "Why did you laugh, O Chief of the Believers?" He replied, "I saw the Prophet, peace be upon him, doing as I did." At this I asked him, "Why did you laugh, O Allah's messenger?" He replied, "Our Lord is pleased when his servant says 'My Lord, forgive me,' and He says, 'My servant knows that there is none to forgive sins except Me'."[308]

Al-Azdi recorded Abdullah Ibn 'Umar's narration that whenever Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, mounted his camel to set out on a journey, he

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305 Reported by Ahmad, At-Tabarani, and Al-Bazar with a sound chain of authorities.

306 Ahmad and Muslim.

307 Qur'an 43:13-14

308 Reported by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban, and Al-Hakim, who said it is sound according to the criterion of Muslim.

glorified Allah (uttered *Allah-o-Akbar*) three times, and then said,

«سبحان الذي سخر لنا هذا ، وما كنا له مقرنين ، وإنا إلى ربنا لمنقلبون. اللهم إنا نسألك في سفرنا هذا البر والتقوى ، ومن العمل ما ترضى ؛ اللهم هون علينا سفرنا هذا ، واطو عنا بعده ؛ اللهم أنت الصاحب في السفر ، والخليفة في الأهل ؛ اللهم إني أعوذ بك من وعثاء السفر ، وكآبة المنقلب ، وسوء المنظر في الأهل والمال»

"Glory to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord, surely, must we return. O Allah, we seek virtue and piety from You on this journey of ours, and actions that please You. O Allah, lighten this journey of ours, and make its distance easy for us. O Allah, You are (our) companion during the journey, and guardian of (our) family. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the hardship of the journey, the gloominess of the sights, and from finding misfortunes in property and family on our return." And the Prophet, peace be upon him, uttered these words in addition, "We are returning repentant, worshipping our Lord and praising Him."[309]

What a Traveller Should Say at Nightfall

Abdullah ibn 'Umar reported that when the Prophet, peace be upon him, was travelling or fighting (in the cause of Allah) and night came on, he said,

«يا أرض ، ربي وربك الله ، أعوذ بالله من شرك ، وشر ما فيك ، وشر ما خلق فيك ، وشر ما دب عليك ، أعوذ بالله من شر كل أسد وأسود ، وحية وعقرب ، ومن شر ساكن البلد ، ومن شر والد وما ولد»

"O earth, my Lord and your Lord is Allah. I seek refuge in Allah from your evil, the evil of what you contain, the evil of what has been created in you, and the evil of what creeps upon you. I seek refuge in Allah from lions, from large black snakes, from other snakes, from scorpions, from the evil of jinn who inhabit settlements, and from a parent and his offspring."[310]

What a Traveller Should Say on Stopping at a Place

Khaulah, daughter of Hakim As-Sallammiya, reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If anyone stops at a place and then says,

«أعوذ بكلمات الله التامات كلها من شر ما خلق»

'I seek refuge with all the perfect words of Allah from the evil of his creatures,' nothing will harm him until he departs from that place."[311]

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309 Ahmad and Muslim.

310 Ahmad and Abu Daw'ud.

311 Reported by the Group except Bukhari and Abu Daw'ud.

On Approaching a Village or Place

'Ata ibn Abi Marwan relates from his father that Ka'ab swore to him by Him Who split the sea for Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, that Suhaib informed him that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, saw a village that he wanted to enter, he always supplicated,

«اللهم رب السموات السبع وما أظللن ، ورب الأرضين السبع وما أقللن ، ورب الشياطين وما أضللن ، ورب الرياح وما ذرين ؛ أسألك خير هذه القرية وخير أهلها وخير ما فيها ، ونعوذ بك من شرها وشر أهلها وشر ما فيها»

"*Allahumma rabbis samawati sab' i wa ma azlalna wa rabbul ardinas sab' i wa ma aqlalna wa rabbush sayatini wa ma adlalna wa rabbur riyyahi wa ma zaraina as' aluka khaira hadhihil qaryata wa khaira ahlaha wa khaira ma fiha wa na' udhu bika min sharriha wa sharri ahliha wa sharri ma fiha* (O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and what they overshadow, Lord of the seven earths and what they carry, and Lord of the devils and those whom they mislead, and Lord of the winds and what they scatter about, I ask You of the good of this village, the good of its people and the good it has, and seek Your protection from its evil, and the evil of its people, and the evil in it)."[312]

Ibn 'Umar reported, "We were with the Prophet, peace be upon him, on a journey. When he saw a town that he wanted to enter he would say,

«اللهم بارك لنا فيها ، اللهم ارزقنا جناها ، وحببنا إلى أهلها وحبب صالحي أهلها إلينا»

'O Allah, bless us in it' three times, and then 'O Allah grant us sustenance from its fruits, and put our love in (the hearts of) its people, and put the love of its righteous people in our hearts'."[313]

A'ishah reported that whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, approached a place that he intended to enter he would say,

«اللهم إني أسألك من خير هذه وخير ما جمعت فيها ، وأعوذ بك من شرها وشر ما جمعت فيها ؛ اللهم ارزقنا جناها وأعذنا من وباها ، وحببنا إلى أهلها ، وحبب صالحي أهلها إلينا»

"O Allah I ask You of the good in it, and the good of what you have placed in it, and I seek Your refuge from its evil and the evil of what You have placed in it. O Allah, give us its fruits and protect us from its plagues, and put our love in the hearts of its people and put the love of its righteous people in our hearts."[314]

What the Traveller Should say at Dawn

Abu Hurairah reported that during a journey when the day broke, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would say,

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[312] Reported by Nasa'i, Ibn Hibban, and Al-Hakim who considers this a sound hadith.

[313] Reported by At-Tabarani in his *Al-Awsat* with a sound chain of authorities.

[314] Reported by As-Sinni.

«سمّع سامع بحمد لله وحسن بلائه علينا ، ربنا صاحبنا وأفضل علينا ، عائذاً بالله من النار»

"A listener has heard that we praise Allah for His favors upon us. Our Lord, accompany us and grant us Your favors. We seek protection of Allah from the Fire."[315]

On Going Uphill, Downhill, or Returning

Jabir said, "We used to say *Allahu akbar* when we went up a high place, and *subhanallah* when we went down a valley."[316]

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, returned from hajj (or '*umrah*). When he approached a path high up in mountain or one that was difficult, he would back up three steps and say,

«لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير ، آيبون تائبون ، عابدون ساجدون ، لربنا حامدون ، صدق الله وعده ، ونصر عبده ، وهزم الأحزاب وحده»

"There is no god but Allah, He is One. He has no partners. To Him belongs all dominion and praise, and He has power over all things. We are returning repentant, worshipping, prostrating, praising our Lord. He kept His promise. And gave victory to His servant, and defeated all the confederates alone."

On Boarding a Ship

Al-Hussain ibn Ali reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "The security for my community against drowning is to say, while boarding a ship (or a boat),

«بسم الله مجريها ومرساها إن ربي لغفور رحيم» : «وما قدروا الله حق قدره ، والأرض جميعاً قبضته يوم القيامة والسموات مطويات بيمينه سبحانه وتعالى عما يشركون»

'Bismillahi majraiha wa mursaha inna rabbi laghafoor un raheem[317]*, wa ma qadarullaha haqa qadrihi, wal ardu jami'an qabadatuhu yaumal qiyyamati was samawatu matwiyyatun bi yameenihi subhanallahi 'amma yushrakun* [318] (In the name of Allah, whether it move or be at rest! For my Lord is, be sure, Oft-Forgiving, Most merciful! No just estimate have they made of Allah, such as is due to Him, On the day of Judgment the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand, Glory to Him! High is He above the partners they attribute to Him!)" This is reported by As-Sinni.

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[315] Muslim.
[316] Bukhari.
[317] Bukhari.
[318] Qur'an 11:41
[319] Qur'an 39:67

Sailing in Rough Weather

It is not permissible to embark on a voyage when the sea is stormy and agitated. According to a hadith reported by Abu 'Umran al-Jawni some of the Companions told him that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Anyone who sleeps on a house-top that has no fence, and then falls and dies, he forfeits the protection of Allah, and anyone who sails while the sea is rough, and then perishes, he forfeits the protection of Allah."[320]

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[320] Reported by Ahmad with a sound chain of authorities.

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